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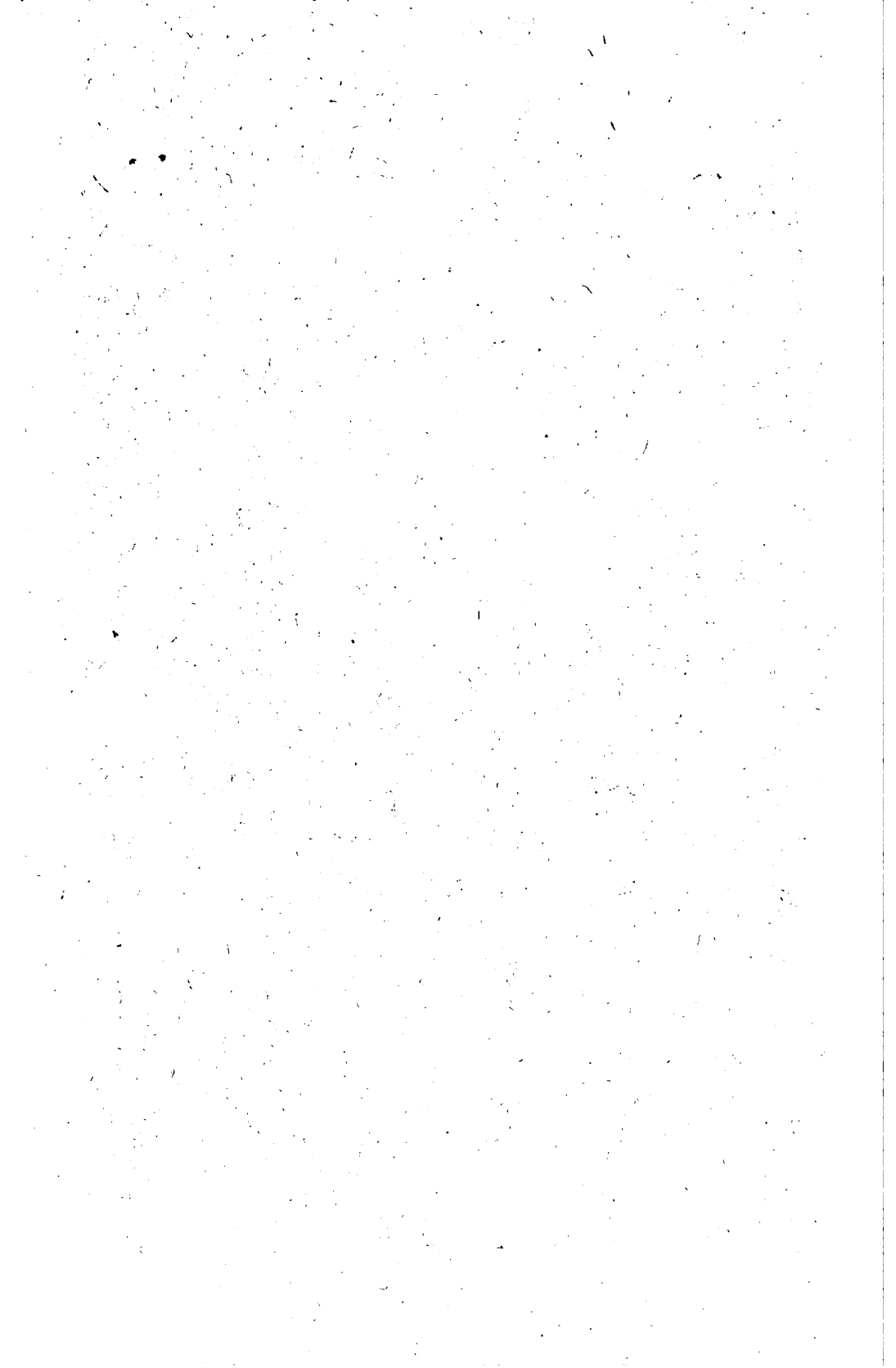
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SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF INDIAN COMMISSIONERS

FOR

THE YEAR 1874.



WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1875.

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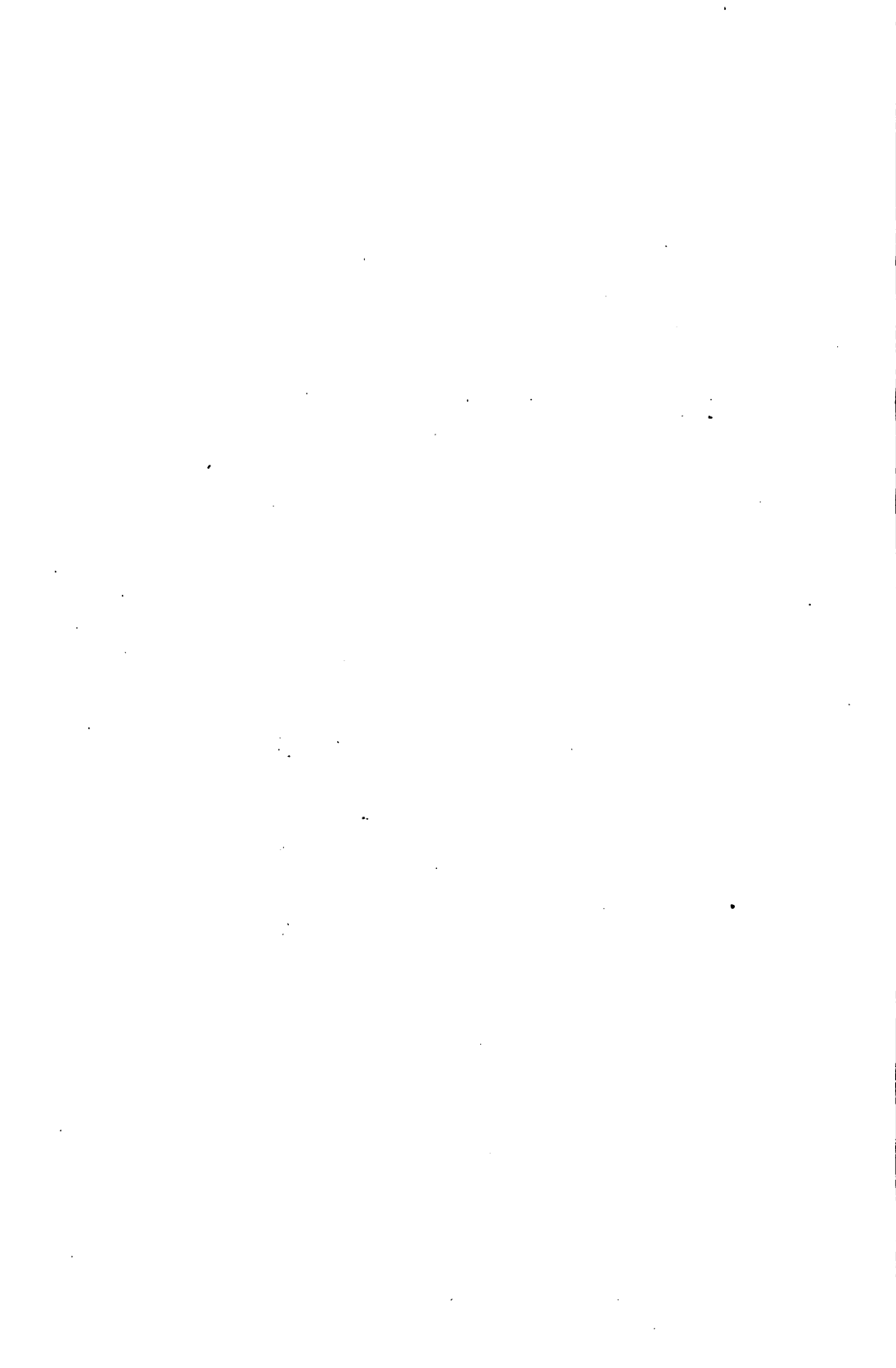
BOARD OF INDIAN COMMISSIONERS

FOR

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REPORT OF THE BOARD OF INDIAN COMMISSIONERS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *January 1, 1875.*

SIR: The Board of Commissioners appointed under the act of Congress April 10, 1869, submit herewith their sixth annual report.

The history of the Indian service during the past year has been marked by more than usual trials and difficulties in its conduct, and by more than usual success in the progress which has been made by the various tribes of Indians toward a higher civilization and the ultimate completion of the peaceful policy inaugurated.

During the previous years, on the recommendation of the then chairman of this board, the experiment was made of removing the two larger agencies of the great Sioux Nation into the interior of their reservation, about one hundred miles distant from the nearest military post. The experiment was made in the belief that, by the removal of what was regarded by the Indians as a standing menace in the presence of a military force, their good faith could be relied on for the execution of the treaty stipulations entered into by them with the Government. It was not followed by a successful result.

During the autumn and winter of 1873-'74, a large number of Minneconjoux, Sans Arcs, Oncepapas and others, known as Northern Sioux, who have never, as a body, acknowledged any treaty obligations with the Government, visited these agencies, and finding there large quantities of goods and supplies without protection, except in the authority of the agent, became insolent in their demands, which he was without power to resist.

The bad influence of these visiting bands of Indians was communicated to the young men of the Ogallalla and Brulé Sioux, residing at these agencies, and the entire body of Indians became so hostile in their demonstrations as to lead to grave apprehensions of a general war.

In the month of February a military force was dispatched from Fort Laramie to these agencies, and about the same period a commission consisting of Bishop W. H. Hare, Rev. S. D. Hinman of the missionary board of the Protestant Episcopal Church, J. D. Bevier, United States Indian inspector, and F. H. Smith, a member of this board, proceeded to these agencies, and it is believed the influence they were able to exert upon the Indians not only prevented the outbreak of war on that occasion, but was effective in reconciling the Indians to the continued presence of a small military force, and in determining them, more fully than ever before, to maintain peaceful relations with the Government. The military expedition to the Black Hills during the past summer, regarded by the Indians as a flagrant violation of their treaty rights, but which resulted in no open hostilities, may be regarded as an indication that nothing will be likely to occur under existing legislation, in the immediate future, that should give apprehension of any further serious trouble on the part of these people.

The report of these commissioners is appended herewith, and is referred to for the details of the negotiations conducted by them. The occurrence of hostilities on the part of the Kiowas, Comanches, and Cheyennes

of the Indian Territory, details of which are given in the report of a commission of which a member of this board was chairman, herewith appended, also gave alarm to many friends of the Indian, who were led to believe that the policy inaugurated, of kindness and good faith on the part of the Government towards the Indian tribes, was about to prove a failure. It is a matter of congratulation that the year closes with the restoration of friendly relations on the part of every tribe and band of Indians toward the Government, and that the results of the year show a greater ratio of progress toward civilization and self-support than in any previous year.

SUPERVISION OF EXPENDITURES.

The resignation, early in June of the present year, of the chairman and five other members of the Board of Commissioners, occurring about the period for the annual purchase of annuity-goods and supplies in New York, was the cause, for the time being, of some embarrassment in the supervision of the expenditures of the Indian Department required by law.

Members of the board, however, were present, and participated in the annual letting in New York. A large number of bidders were present; contracts were awarded, in every instance, to the lowest responsible bidder, and at prices considerably below those of any previous year. Provision was made for a more than usually rigid inspection of the goods contracted for, and evidence has been received which justifies the statement that the goods delivered have been of excellent quality and satisfactory in all respects; and in the articles of blankets, flour, and beef alone, if the quantities delivered shall be the same as last year, will show a reduction of expenditures in favor of the present year—

On blankets.....	\$19,573 60
On flour.....	105,200 00
On beef.....	335,213 00
Total	459,986 60

During the month of October, J. D. Lang, a member of the Board of Commissioners, accompanied by the secretary of the board, visited the Pacific Coast for the purpose of supervising the purchase of annuity-goods and supplies required for the Indian service in California, Oregon, and Washington Territory; the season being too late, in the opinion of the Department, to admit of advertisement, the goods for the California agencies were purchased in San Francisco in open market, after inviting liberal competition. The commissioners then proceeded to Portland, Oreg., and conducted in that city the purchase of goods required for the agencies of Oregon and Washington Territory, also in open market, and at the lowest rates offered by various competing business-houses of Portland.

In pursuance of authority from the Interior and War Departments, the chief commissary for the Military Department of the Columbia was authorized to act as purchasing, inspecting, and forwarding agent. A list of goods, with the prices annexed, being supplied to the various agents, will enable them to order whatever additional supplies they may require, without the necessity of leaving their agencies for that purpose, and should result in increased economy and efficiency of service. The contracts of last year, made in San Francisco by the purchasing committee of this board, for some leading articles were largely in excess of the quantities required, and in respect to clothing, after filling all the requisitions of agents on the Pacific coast for the two years, still leaves

a balance of about one-half the quantity contracted for on hand. With this exception, the articles required on the Pacific coast for the present year were procured on terms comparing favorably, both in respect to quality and prices, with those purchased in New York.

In compliance with the requirements of law, the executive committee of the board has, during the year, subjected every voucher for the expenditures of the Indian Department to a rigid scrutiny. Since the commencement of the present fiscal year the committee has conducted its business at the office of the board in Washington, and has availed itself, by personal examination, of the records and files of the Department, and has sought information from all available sources in respect to the accuracy, honesty, and good faith of each account.

The committee acknowledge with pleasure the promptness of the Department in the correction of every error and abuse to which their attention has been called, and their gratification in the improvement, which is manifest from year to year, in the honesty and efficiency with which the difficult business transactions for the Indian service are conducted.

In the judgment of the board a better system should govern the agents in the manner of recording and accounting for the expenditure by them of the Government funds and other property placed in their custody. The practice, of long continuance, has been heretofore, in most of the agencies, to retain in the private possession of the agent all original memoranda, showing in detail the distribution of goods and supplies; indeed, the complaint is frequently made by agents, in taking possession of their offices, that not a scrap of paper or the scratch of a pen comes to them from their predecessors, indicating in any respect their manner of discharging official duties. It is also apparent to any one visiting a considerable number of agencies, that no common understanding exists among agents in respect to the powers conferred upon them by law and the general duties they are expected to discharge; and the preparation of uniform regulations for the government of the various agents, advising them of the powers and duties appertaining to their office, and requiring vouchers for each individual transaction to be made and retained as a part of the records of the office, is indispensable to the safe conduct of their business.

VISITS BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD.

Visits by members of the board during the year have been made to most of the agencies in New York, Minnesota, Nebraska, Dakota, the Indian Territory, California, Oregon, and Washington Territory. Special reports of these visits have been made whenever occasion required, and are appended hereto.

GENERAL POLICY.

A period in the conduct and history of the Indian service of the country has been reached, when in the judgment of the board the Government may safely look forward to the final determination of its relations with the Indian tribes as a separate people. Experience has demonstrated the wisdom of the policy steadily pursued since the commencement of the present administration, of collecting the wild Indian tribes upon reservations, limited in extent. The rapid settlement of the territory occupied by them as hunting-grounds rendered the adoption of such a policy necessary both for the protection of white

settlers against depredations, and to bring the Indians under the influence and control of the agents for the purpose of civilization. Isolation from the demoralizing influence of the class of white persons always found upon border settlements has been considered a condition requisite to the early improvement of the savage tribes until a certain period of advancement shall have been reached; the history of the world, however, demonstrates the fact that no community can ever reach an advanced stage of civilization without recognition of the right of individual property, and it is believed that whenever any tribe of Indians has reached such a stage of advancement in intelligence and good conduct as will enable the various members to transact their own business and participate in the affairs of the community with which they are surrounded, the policy of the Government should be to encourage such persons to renounce their tribal relations and to establish individual homes for themselves and become invested with all the privileges of citizenship; that this process should continue from year to year, stimulated by every inducement the Government can properly offer, until the entire Indian race shall become merged in the community at large, and further intervention by the Government for their special care shall become unnecessary.

The report hereto appended of a visit to the Indian reservations in the State of New York, justifies the recommendation that measures should at once be taken for the enfranchisement of the Indians located upon reservations in that State. The permanent annuities provided by treaty stipulation would afford ample means for the endowment of such educational and benevolent institutions as, upon consultation with these tribes, should seem desirable. The dissolution of their tribal relations, and the division in severalty, of lands and other property held in common, would become necessary in the execution of such a plan, and, with the exercise of reasonable wisdom in the negotiation, could be satisfactorily accomplished.

A large proportion of the Indians west of the Cascade and Sierra Nevada Mountains, on the Pacific coast, are now quietly engaged in various branches of industry off the reservations, and, in sections of country of considerable extent, are more depended on as laborers by farmers, lumbermen, wool-growers, and others, than any other class of persons.

No apprehension of further hostility by any Indians in this section of the country exists, and it is believed that at an early period, without injustice to the Indians, and with entire safety to the white communities by which they are surrounded, the Government may cease to make further provision for their support. The same facts are true to a greater or less extent in respect to the Indians under the care of the Government in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Nevada.

EDUCATION.

The schools heretofore established upon Indian reservations, in which provision is made for the subsistence of the pupils away from the demoralizing influences of their homes, and in which for a period of years they are taught not only the ordinary branches of school education, but are also trained in various branches of industry, have proved the most effective means for the improvement of these people. Young men and women graduating from these schools, in nearly every instance, are intelligent, reliable, and conform in their subsequent lives to the customs and habits of civilization.

Provision is made in the existing treaties with all the various bands of Sioux, Kiowas, Comanches, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and others of the

wilder tribes, for the compulsory education of all children between the ages of six and sixteen years.

Apparently no effort has been made in the seven years of existence of these treaties to secure a compliance with this stipulation on the part of the Indians; the agents have reported themselves powerless to enforce it, and the Indians, as a rule, have refused to allow their children to attend school. If the Government through its agents had insisted upon compliance with these obligations, even by the use of a moderate amount of force, if necessary, and especially by making it a condition upon which the parents should participate in the benefactions of the Government, and the young men and women of these wild tribes had received the benefit of such education, the Indian problem would now be solved.

WILL THE INDIAN WORK?

A provision in the legislation of Congress at its last session requires that, in distributing supplies to the Indians for whom the same are appropriated, the agent shall require all able-bodied male Indians to perform service upon the reservation; giving, however, to the Secretary of the Interior the discretionary power to except from such requirement any particular tribe, when in his judgment proper and expedient.

The question of labor, involving that of self-support by the Indians, was considered by the board as of sufficient importance to justify a full investigation as to what extent it has been practicable to comply with this requirement of law, and in the same connection to obtain an expression of opinion from those best qualified to form an intelligent judgment as to what measures are best calculated to solve the difficult question. Inquiries on this subject were therefore directed to all the agents, and to others in the Indian country whose experience would render their opinions of value.

Responses from a large number of persons have been received, containing much valuable information, a summary of which is here given:

Replies to the circular issued August 10, 1874, show that the number of Indians engaged in manual labor and supporting themselves wholly or in part is much larger than is commonly supposed.

East of the Mississippi River about thirteen thousand, three-fourths of the Indian population, are reported as laboring industriously in various pursuits, many of them, especially those residing in New York and Michigan, being thrifty farmers, and some skillful mechanics.

In the western valley of the Mississippi, including Minnesota, Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and the Indian Territory, about sixty-five thousand (one-half) are employed, the majority being in the eastern part of the Indian Territory, where they have made considerable progress in the pursuits of civilized life.

The southwestern Territories, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, and the States of Nevada and California, have an Indian population of nearly sixty thousand. Of these, about eleven thousand, or nearly one-fifth, are at work; the Navajoes of New Mexico being largely employed in the manufacture of silk and woolen goods.

In the northwestern Territories, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, Washington, and the State of Oregon, of the fifty thousand Indians only about six thousand, or one-eighth, are accustomed to any degree of labor.

Estimating the Indian population of the country at two hundred and fifty thousand, the reports indicate that nearly two-fifths, or about ninety-five thousand, are laborers, and that many more are beginning to learn the first lessons of industry and thrift.

Reports upon the progress in civilization of Indians employed as laborers outside the reservations, in comparison with those who have remained on the reservations, exhibit, as might be expected, some difference of opinion. The majority testify that those who remain within the bounds of the reservation improve most rapidly; they are less exposed to corruption and vice, and are better protected from injustice and fraud.

General Hazen, who has served long in the Indian country, and Gen. J. B. Sanborn, of Saint Paul, who has had much experience among Indians, are very positive that all uncivilized Indians should be placed upon reservations, and unceasing war made on those who do not remain there.

Agents Mahan, of Wisconsin; Whitehead, of Minnesota; Adams, of Dakota; Arny, of New Mexico; Bateman, of Nevada; Burchard and Vosburgh, of California; Henry, Wilbur, Beatty, and Eells, of Washington Territory; Dyar, Fairchild, and Litchfield, of Oregon, and Monteith, of Idaho, all agree that the comparison is greatly in favor of those who are employed on the reservations; that outside they learn the vices of white men, become impoverished and demoralized, and are making no progress towards a civilized life.

On the other hand, Agents Sperry, of Dakota, Bradley and Miles, of Nebraska, and Simms, of Washington Territory, express the opinion that contact with their white neighbors, and the example of industry and thrift, greatly benefit and improve the Indians.

Agent Belts, of Michigan, declares that those thrown among the whites and upon their own resources make the better advancement in civilization, and that the policy of reservations and annuities is a stupendous failure.

The same view is taken substantially by Hon. Richard Chute, of Minneapolis, whose large experience among Indians has convinced him that the great mistakes in our past policy have been the removal of Indians from the land of their birth, and the dooming of them to isolation on reservations held in common; that money annuities are often injurious, and that annuities of food foster idleness and dependency.

A confirmation of this opinion is found in the experiment of Special Agent Williamson, of Dakota, who has charge of seventy-five families of Santee Sioux, settled on Government lands, each man taking a homestead claim the same as white men. With but very little aid from Government, and under the motive of *necessity*, they have learned to support themselves by labor.

Several agents express the opinion that tribal relations and the rule of chiefs should be abolished. And Mr. Chute adduces the instance of Michigan to show the safety and wisdom of granting all the rights of citizenship to the more enlightened and civilized Indians. It was provided by the legislature of that State, in 1850, that all who would assume civilized habits should be citizens of the State. In 1855 a new treaty was made for those living on the lower peninsula, compounding all the old ones, by which it was provided that annuities should terminate in fourteen years; that lands should be given in severalty, and be inalienable; and that the tribal relations should be abolished. The result is that these Indians are full citizens.

A similar treatment of all Indians, except the hostile tribes of the plains, is advised as the means of making them self-supporting and useful citizens. The first step is to give to every adult Indian the right to select one hundred and sixty acres of land for a homestead, for his own separate use and occupation, and make his title to it inalienable for thirty years. Then abolish his tribal relations, and deal with him as an individual.

With him concurs Senator Howe, of Wisconsin, who says that the first step is to possess the Indians of their lands in severalty. To transform brutes into farmers, resolve their parks into farms. This done, all other things will be added. Nearly all the Indian agents agree that it is impossible to overestimate the importance of this measure. Its tendency will be to subdue their restlessness and abate their love of roving; to cultivate a love for home and to encourage them to make improvements.

It appears that probably not less than seventy-five thousand Indians, of the wilder tribes, are supported by the Government appropriations, without any substantial contribution on their part toward their own sustenance. It is undoubtedly true that up to this time, in the alternative of feeding or fighting these tribes, the expenditure has been an economical one; but its continuance, for any considerable period in the future, will prove as disastrous to the Indians as costly to the Government. The effect of being well fed without the necessity or incentive for any physical exertion on their part, for the past seven years, is apparent in the condition of a large portion of the Sioux Nation in a marked increase of dyspepsia and other diseases of the digestive organs, and decrease of physical energy.

The efforts of agents to induce the Indians of the wild tribes to engage in pursuits of industry have not, as a rule, been successful, partially from the hereditary prejudice against labor as unmanly and degrading, and, in part, from the fact that the soil in the country they occupy cannot be cultivated to any profitable extent except with irrigation. The requirements of labor on the part of these tribes, without the provision of facilities other than are now furnished, will continue, necessarily, barren of results. The Government is therefore remitted

to the alternative of continuing to feed and clothe these people until, from disease and enervation, they shall become extinct, or of providing for them the means of remunerative labor.

The latter may be secured in their present locations by authorizing irrigating works on a large scale, which may be constructed by Indian labor as a remuneration for subsistence furnished; or the Indians may be required to engage in the raising and care of cattle and sheep, for which their country is well adapted, and for which their previous habits present a less insurmountable obstacle; or by the two plans combined. In any event, a vigorous enforcement of whatever policy may be determined on, with an increased present expenditure by the Government to provide the necessary means, will be requisite to any successful experiment.

The necessity for prompt and energetic action to accomplish the object sought is so pressing that any reasonable expenditure and any proper measures for enforcing habits of industry on the part of the wild Indians, promising success, are justifiable. The accomplishment of this purpose will relieve the difficulty of greatest magnitude remaining in the solution of the Indian problem.

Consultation with very many who have had large experience in the management of Indians leads to the belief that any policy in this regard determined on by the Government may be enforced without the necessity of resort to military interference.

ENFORCEMENT OF ORDER.

The tribal organization of the Indians in their savage condition does not include the recognition of any authority except that of the chief, and he is vested with no control over the personal liberty of any member of the tribe. Outside intervention has always been resented; and, therefore, while the wild tribes have entered into treaty obligations requiring the enforcement of order, the compulsory education of children, the apprehension and delivery of offenders for punishment, and the obligation of labor, no machinery has existed for the enforcement of these stipulations, and they have remained nugatory.

The creation of a police or constabulary force for the internal government of these people seems necessary. Such an organization exists in many of the tribes who have made progress in civilization; and the experiments made in that direction, among the wilder Indians, demonstrate the practicability of its adaptation to them. An organization of a hundred mounted armed police among the Navajoes, three years since, proved an effective means of enforcing order, restraining raids, and the recovery of stolen property; the employment of members of the tribe at the Red Cloud Sioux agency, as an armed police during the past year, is regarded by the agent as an entirely safe and satisfactory experiment; the employment of Apaches in Arizona, by the military authorities, as a co-operative force with the Army, against their tribe, is well known to have been a most effective means of subduing the refractory Indians. Indeed, the evidence is abundant that in every tribe the selection of a small number of Indians by the agent, to be instructed and disciplined by him as a constabulary force, would prove a safe and effective means of preserving order, and of assisting the tribe in enforcing among themselves their treaty obligations. In a large number of instances, the existence of such a force would obviate the necessity of the continuance of a military post near the agency.

CO-OPERATION OF RELIGIOUS BODIES.

The co-operation of the religious bodies with the Government, in the civilization of the Indians, has proved an element, the importance of which even the missionary boards have not fully appreciated. The pagan Indian resists with all the energy and stubbornness of his savage nature every effort to educate, clothe, or in any manner conform him to the habits and customs of civilized life; and when, step by step, he yields to force and the penalty of threatened starvation, his progress is slow and unsatisfactory. On the other hand his conversion to Christianity brings him at once to understand that he must lead a new life, and, under the instruction of his religious teachers, his elevation to the plane of comparative civilization is easy and rapid. A careful investigation does not disclose a single exception to the rule that where rapid progress has been made, the work of the faithful, self-sacrificing, energetic missionary has constituted the most important element of success. The Christian missionary and the earnest practical teacher, who, in addition to the rudiments of learning, gives lessons in industry that the people may become self-supporting—one indispensable to the other—are necessarily the pioneers of Indian civilization.

CHARACTER AND COMPENSATION OF AGENTS.

The results to be accomplished for any Indian tribe depend largely upon the character of the agent to whom their care is intrusted.

The positive improvement, year by year, in the men designated by the various religious bodies as their representatives, is noticeable; perhaps in most instances the best men, whose services can be obtained for the compensation allowed, are selected.

The experience of the service from year to year has made more apparent the necessity of increased compensation, and it is hoped the legislation of another session of Congress will not be completed without some proper provision in this respect. A graduated scale of compensation seems best fitted to meet the wants of the service.

In many instances the present rate of compensation is ample, considering the number of Indians to be cared for and the amount of funds to be expended; for others, in which thousands of Indians are to be cared for, and hundreds of thousands of dollars disbursed, the amount of \$1,500 a year is wholly inadequate.

A provision of law authorizing the President, in his discretion, to add, from the general appropriations applicable to the Indian service, such amount as he may deem proper to the salary of any agent, when in his judgment necessary, would perhaps best meet the requirements of the service in this regard.

KIOWAS, COMANCHES, AND CHEYENNES.

In determining what action can be wisely taken in the disposition of these tribes, at the close of their late hostilities, it should be borne in mind that about one-half the aggregate number of the three tribes in the Indian Territory, with the entire body of Arapahoes affiliated with them, have remained during the season quietly at their agencies, having, in obedience to the requirements of the Government, registered the names of all able-bodied male adults, reported when directed for

roll-call, and in all respects exhibited commendable obedience and good behavior. They were repeatedly assured that the intervention of a military force was no less for the protection of the innocent than the punishment of the guilty. It would not therefore be in accordance with justice or sound policy to make no distinction between the hostile and friendly in the disposition now to be made.

The disarming and removal of the portion of the tribes, now in custody as prisoners of war, to the eastern portion of the Territory, would be easily accomplished, because they are in the custody of the Government and expect punishment; the compulsory attendance of their children at boarding-schools, beyond their control, as hostages for their good behavior, and their own establishment upon reservations, the soil of which is suitable for cultivation, would, it is believed, as in the case of the Modocs, enable their agent to enforce strict discipline without the intervention of force, and to secure rapid progress in civilization.

On the other hand, the removal of the entire tribes, especially if accompanied with a requirement to surrender up the arms of the peaceable Indians, would be regarded by them as a penalty for having remained friendly.

The commissioners who visited these agencies during the period of active hostilities, after full consultation with those in charge upon the reservation, concur in the belief that, without the necessity of resort to force, no difficulty will occur in securing industry, obedience, and good behavior, on the part of the Kiowas, Comanches, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes remaining at the agencies, if those recently hostile shall be removed.

THE MODOCS.

The visit by a member of the board to the present location of that portion of the Modoc Indians who, as prisoners of war, were in the latter portion of 1873 removed to the Indian Territory, confirms the general impression of the good conduct of these Indians in their present relations. The transfer of the remainder of the tribe from the Pacific Coast to the same locality, as recommended, would, it is believed, in its salutary results, amply justify the small appropriation required for that purpose.

DISCONTINUANCE OF RESERVATIONS.

Attention is called to the special report of two members of the board relative to the condition of the Indian service in the extreme Northwest, in the vicinity of Puget Sound, and on the Pacific Coast. The rapid, diminution in numbers of all the tribes in this section justifies a comparative reduction in the expense incurred for their care and support. Some of the once powerful tribes, as, for example, the Chinook, are without a single representative, while in other instances the remnants of ten or twelve tribes, numbering but a few hundred in the aggregate, are confederated at a single agency. The commissioners state that a large portion of the Indians are not living upon reservations, or congregated together in their tribal capacity, but are scattered through this section of country, as laborers. They represent that those now residing on the twelve reservations set apart for their use would be better cared for if consolidated upon three, especially if the proceeds of the sale of the nine reservations proposed to be vacated were invested for their benefit.

The plan recommended involves dispensing with the machinery of two of the present agencies, and contemplates the discontinuance of the others at an early period, in the belief that neither the interests of the

Indians nor those of their white neighbors will require the further intervention of the Government.

The commissioners also suggest improvements in the conduct of these agencies relative to compulsory education, labor, and the selection and conduct of employ  s, which, in the judgment of the board, would add materially to the efficiency of the service, if made applicable to all other agencies.

TIMBERED LANDS.

The construction of law given by the late decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of *George Cook*, (*The United States vs. George Cook*, No. 161, October term, 1873,) denies to Indians occupying reservations containing what are termed timbered lands the right to dispose of timber standing on such reservations, or to cut and sell logs from the same, unless the cutting shall be an incident to the clearing of the lands for the purpose of cultivation and improvement. In portions of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Washington Territory, and elsewhere, the reservations set apart for Indian occupation consist exclusively, or for the most part, of timbered lands; the only profitable occupation in which the Indians so located can engage is that of cutting and disposing of the timber, and the only marketable commodity within their reach is the timber standing upon their reservations. In some instances, recent fires have swept through the timber so located, killing the trees; but from which valuable lumber may be obtained if disposed of before its quality is impaired by decay. Unless permission is given for the cutting and sale of such timber without delay, it will cease to be valuable for any purpose. The importance of protecting the timbered lands of the United States from unnecessary depredation and waste is fully recognized, but it is believed that in special instances, when, in the judgment of the President or of the Secretary of the Interior, necessary for the subsistence of the Indians, or to create a fund for educational or other beneficial purposes, discretionary power should be given to authorize the cutting and disposing of the timber upon reservations, under such restrictions as will prevent unnecessary waste.

ALASKA.

Attention has been invited in reports of the Board of Commissioners, heretofore made, to the condition of the inhabitants of Alaska. It has not been considered wise, for various reasons, to extend the jurisdiction of the Indian Department of the Government over these people, and while no further recommendation in that direction is offered, it is suggested as very important that provision should now be made for obtaining authentic information of the condition and wants of the bands and races occupying the interior, of which too little is known to determine whether any duty devolves upon the Government in regard to them or not.

THE INDIAN TERRITORY.

The condition and wants of the civilized Indians occupying the eastern portion of the Indian Territory has for a considerable period been a source of much solicitude. The treaties made with the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole Nations, on the event of their removal west of the Mississippi, and subsequently, contemplate the establishment of governments by these nations without interference, except as specified, by the Government of the United States or any State.

government. The treaty stipulations in this regard vary materially, in respect to the different nations, in the provisions they make for local government and the restrictions imposed. The experiment of independent local governments on the part of these Indians has been tried for sufficient length of time to test its practicability, and has not proved satisfactory in its results.

Very considerable progress in education and in the various pursuits of industry has been made, but the governments established have not been able to afford proper protection to person and property; and within the past ten years, portions of the Territory have become the resort of thieves and outlaws to such an extent as to render essential the intervention of some power with sufficient strength to enforce order and bring to punishment persons engaged in criminal acts. An effort was made within a comparatively short period, on the part of the Indians themselves, to organize a more efficient government, and a constitution applicable to the entire Territory was framed. It failed to receive the sanction of the proportion of the separate governments required for its adoption, and no further movement for the organization of a general government has occurred.

Measures intended to afford a remedy for this unfortunate condition of affairs have from time to time been brought forward in Congress, but they have not received the assent of the accredited delegations from these nations who have visited Washington, and have not resulted in legislation. The Board of Commissioners, at its meeting in November of the present year, directed a delegation of its members to visit the Indian Territory for the purpose of consultation with leading men of the more civilized Indian nations "touching the condition of the Territory, and such legislation in behalf thereof as might be deemed necessary to give better security to person and property." They were met at Muscogee on the 11th of December by a large and influential delegation from the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles. The consultation, which lasted two days, was of a most friendly nature. After a full discussion, however, the delegation present adhered to the previous action of their respective national councils, declining to take the initiative or participate in any movement leading to a change in their national condition or relations with the United States.

The commissioners, after a full consideration of the subject, recommend that a territorial government, not inconsistent with existing treaties, be established by the United States, the governor to be appointed by the President, and the legislative body to be elected by the people of the Territory. They also recommend the establishment of United States courts within said Territory, and the recognition of the right of the people to be represented in Congress by a Delegate to be elected by them. The special report of the commissioners is appended, and is referred to for a fuller statement of details and results of this visit.

It is believed that the measures recommended in accordance with the spirit of treaty obligations entered into with the United States, are essential to the welfare of these people. They offer the assistance of the General Government in the preservation of order and the establishment of more perfect municipal regulations, while the right of self-government is practically maintained.

The unsettled condition of affairs in consequence of movements made in Congress and elsewhere, looking to the organization of a territorial government and a change in the relations of the United States to these

Indians, is very detrimental to any effort on their part for the improvement of their condition, and it is hoped that the legislation of the present session of Congress will not be completed without some definite action on this subject.

CLINTON B. FISK, *Saint Louis, Chairman.*

H. H. SIBLEY, *Saint Paul, Minn.*

E. A. HAYT, *New York.*

N. J. TURNEY, *Circleville, Ohio.*

JOHN D. LANG, *Vassalborough, Me.*

B. R. ROBERTS, *Sandy Springs, Md.*

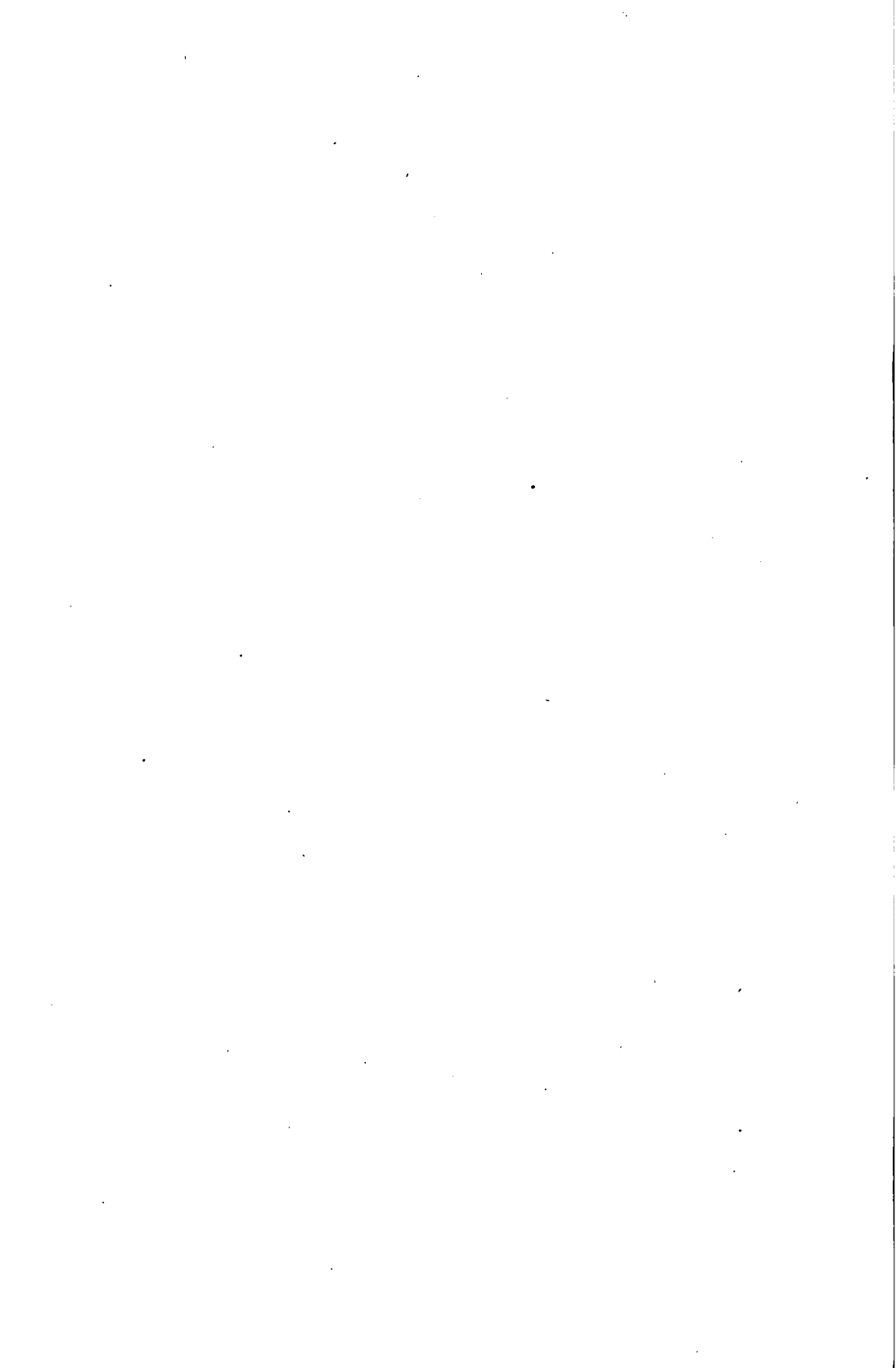
CHAS. G. HAMMOND, *Chicago, Ill.*

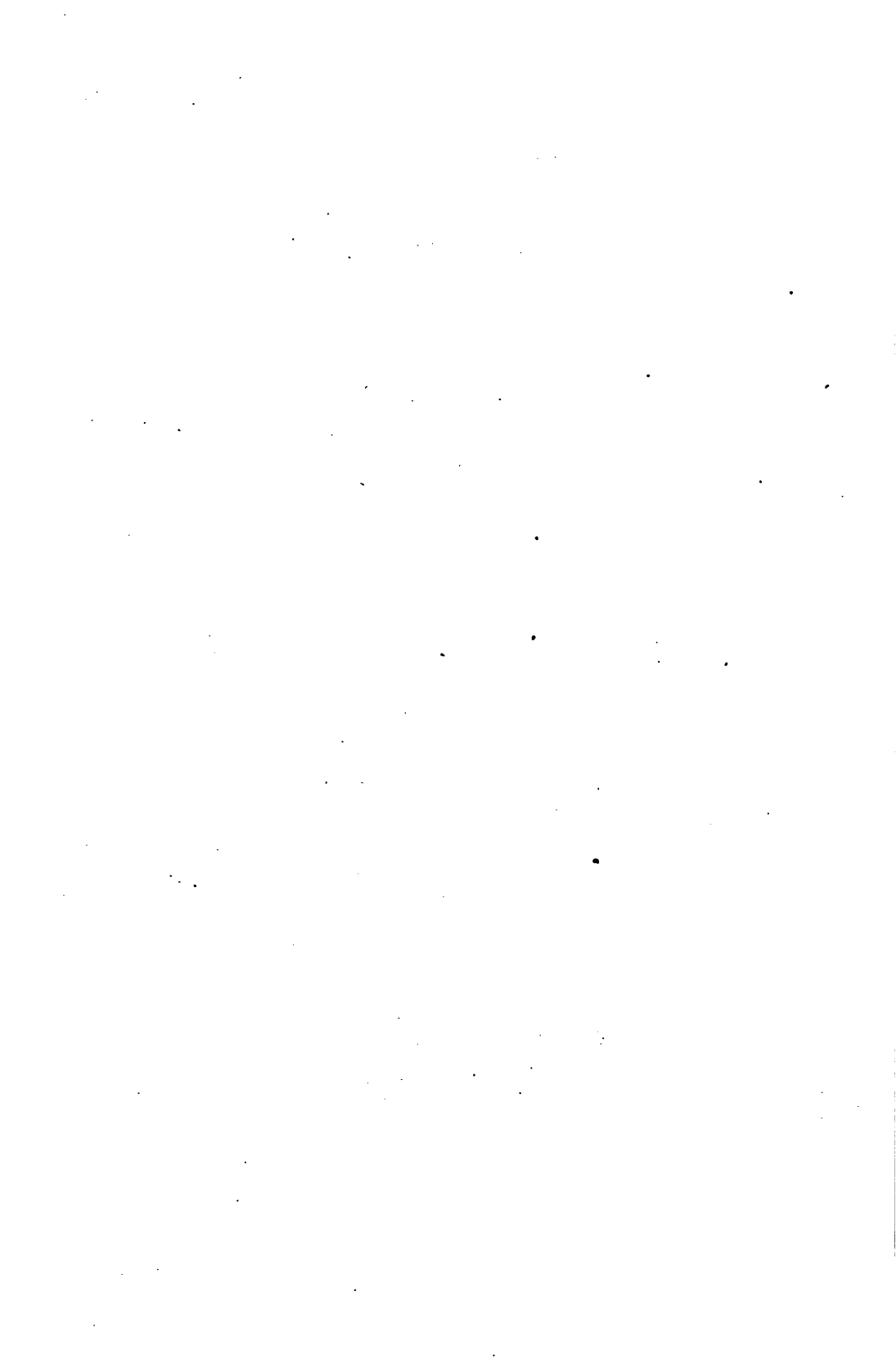
WILLIAM STICKNEY, *Washington.*

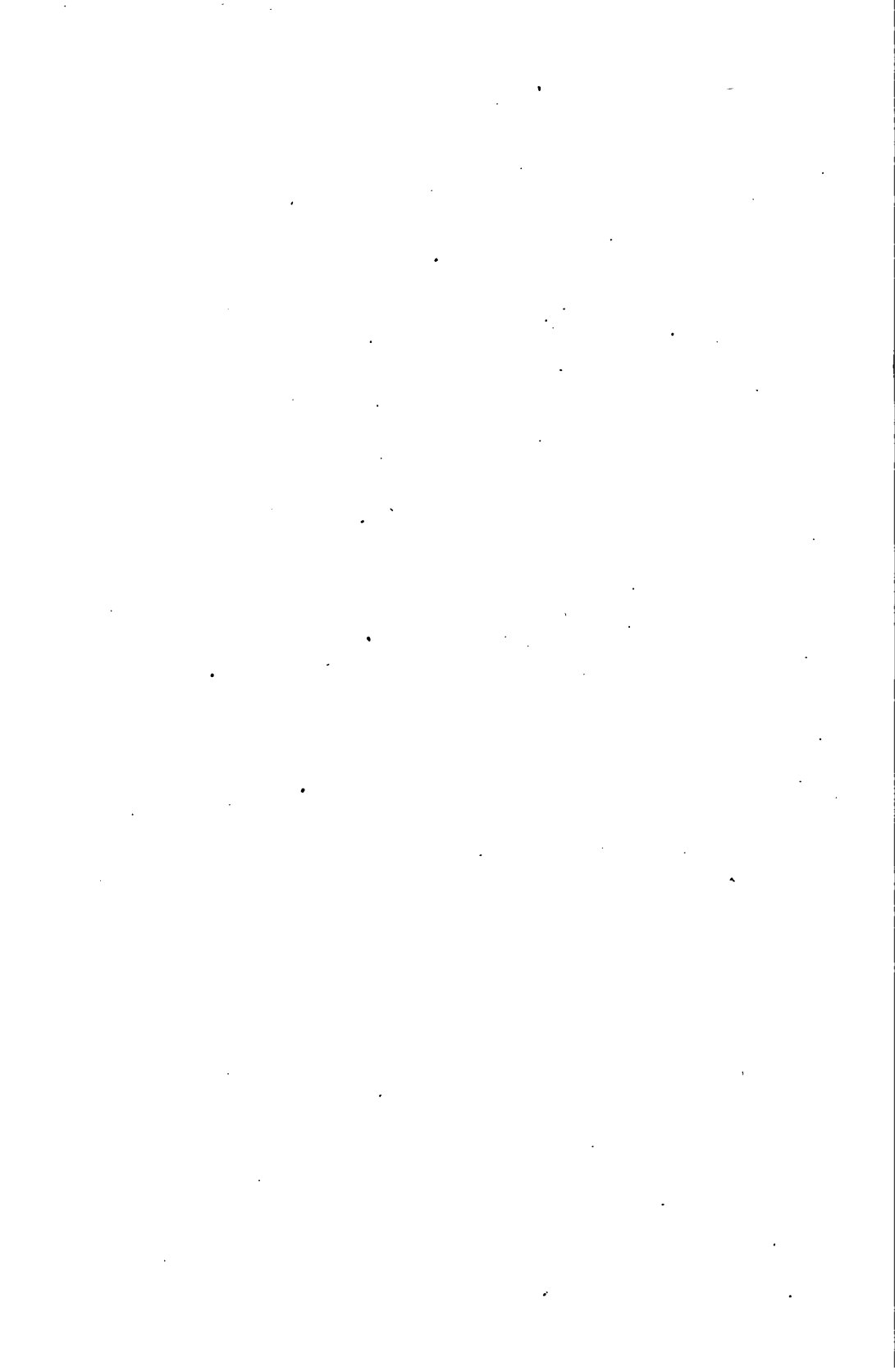
F. H. SMITH, *Washington, Secretary.*

Hon. C. DELANO,
Secretary of the Interior.

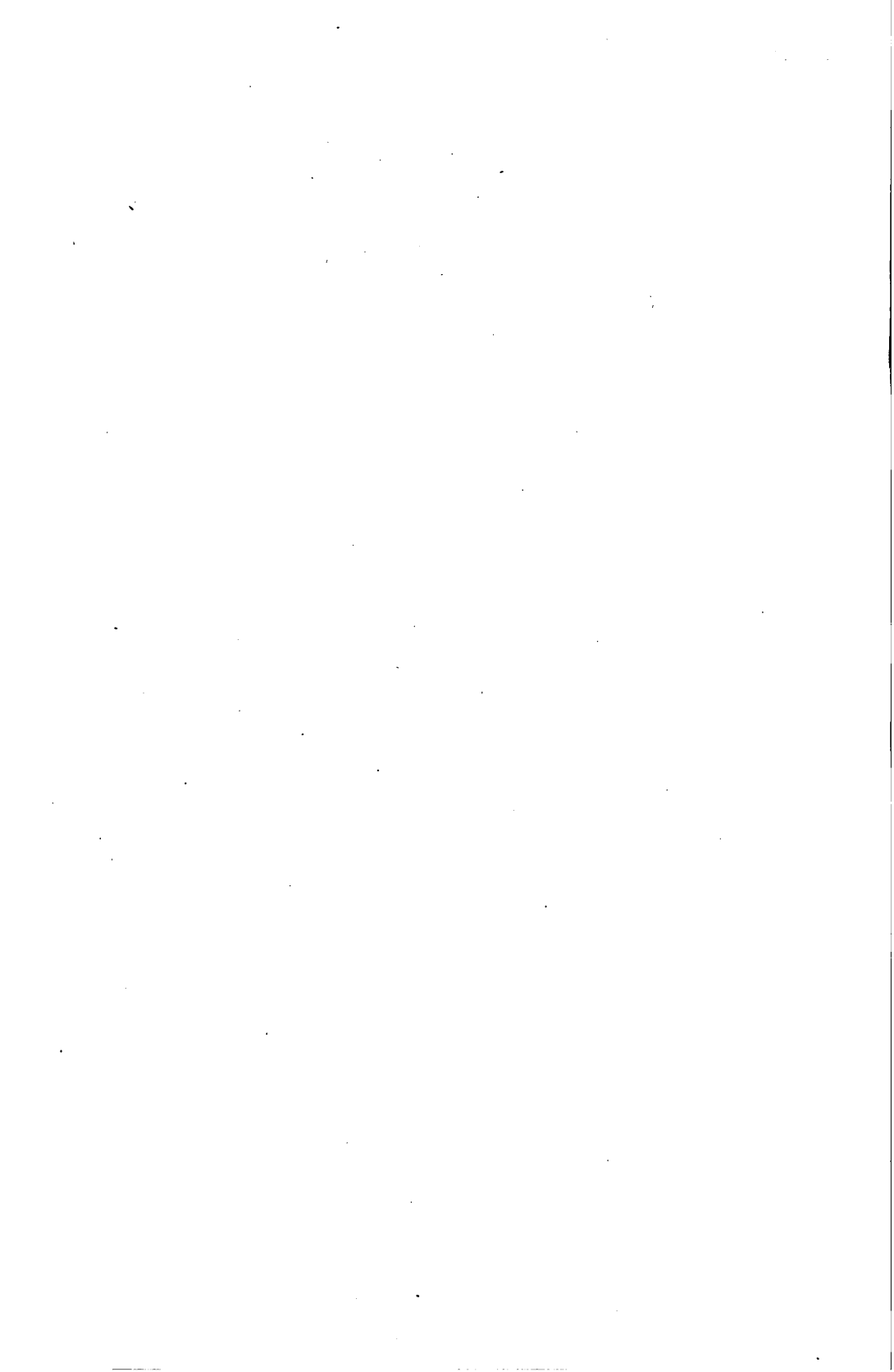


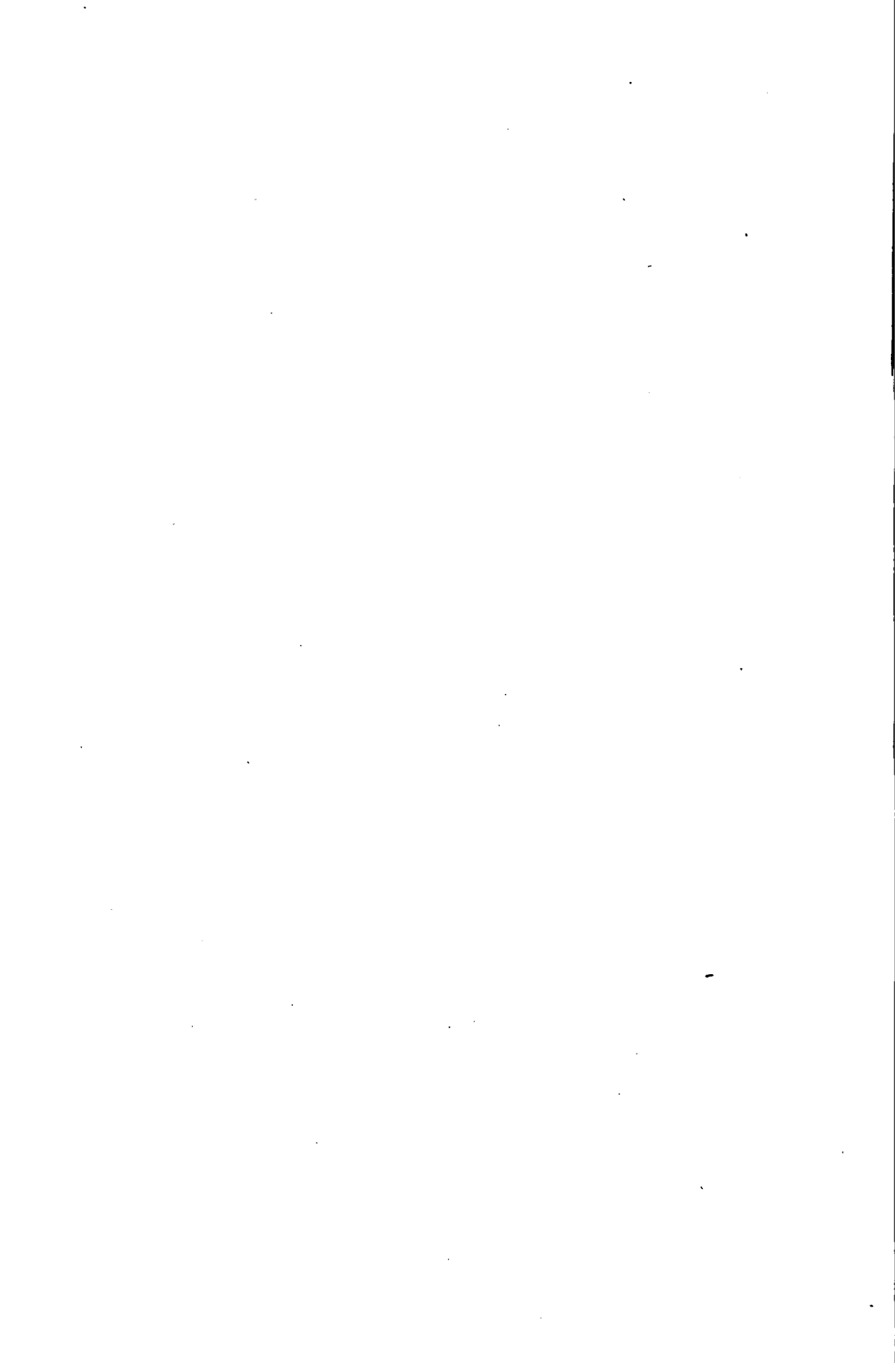




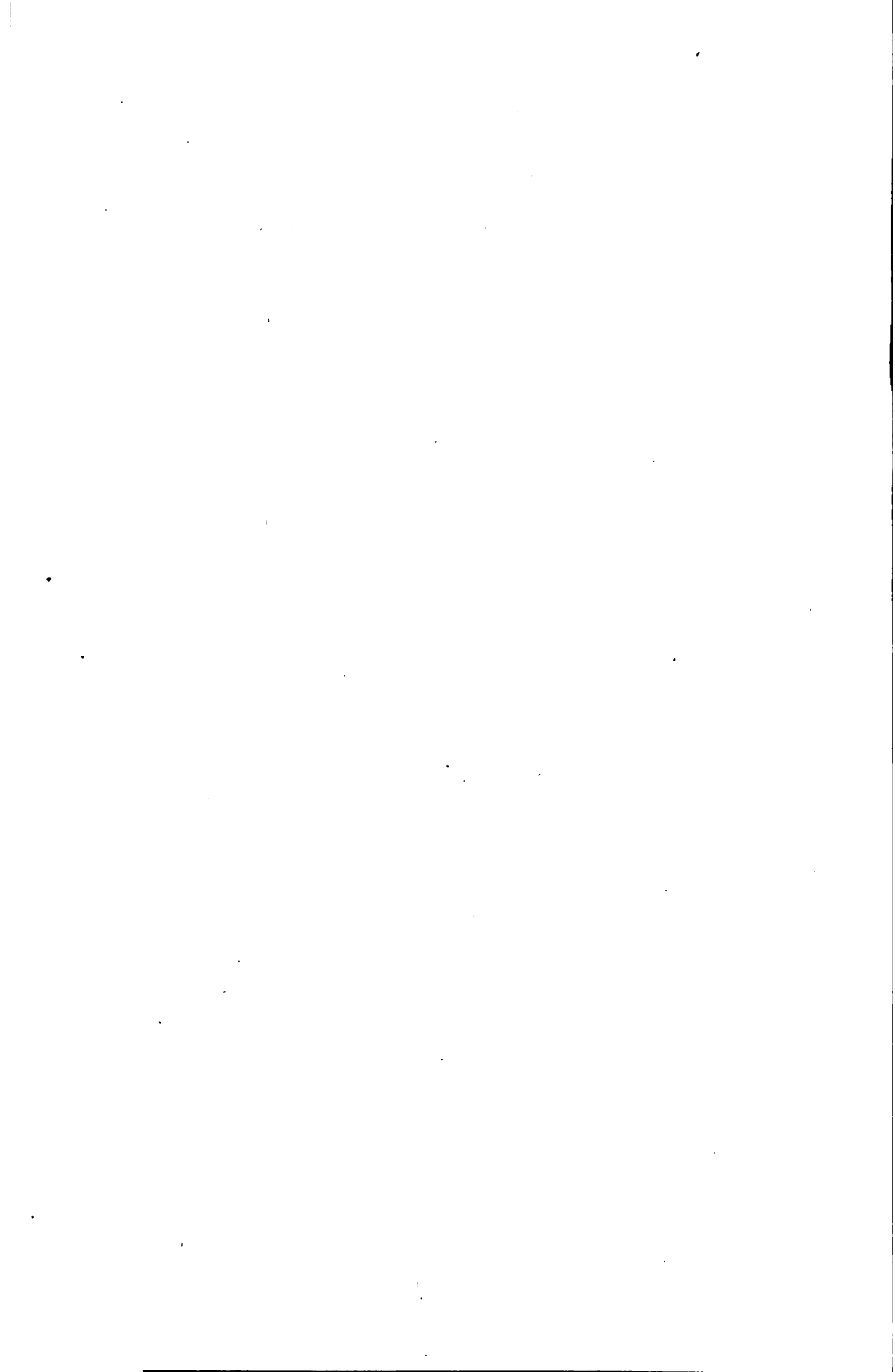




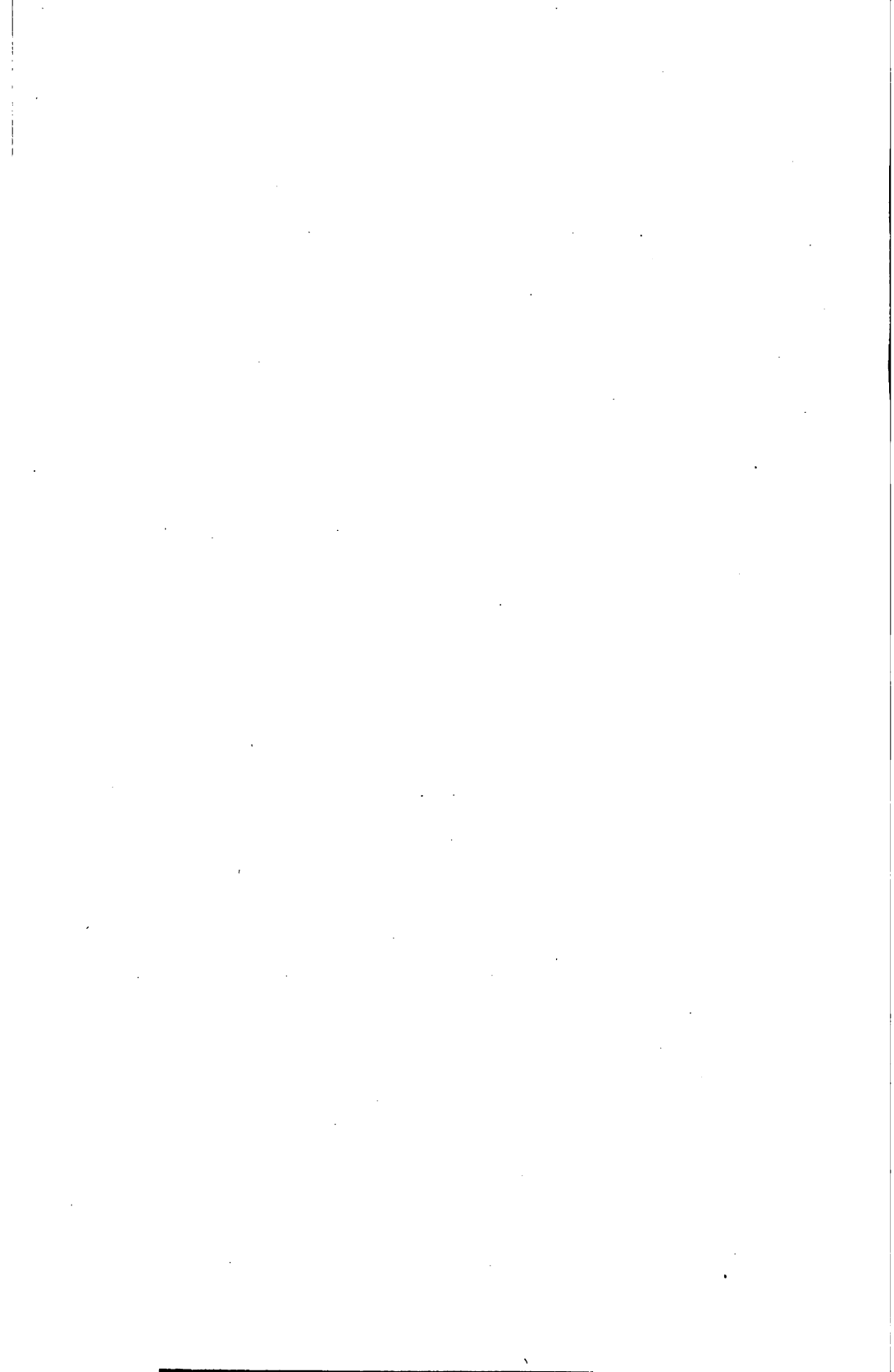


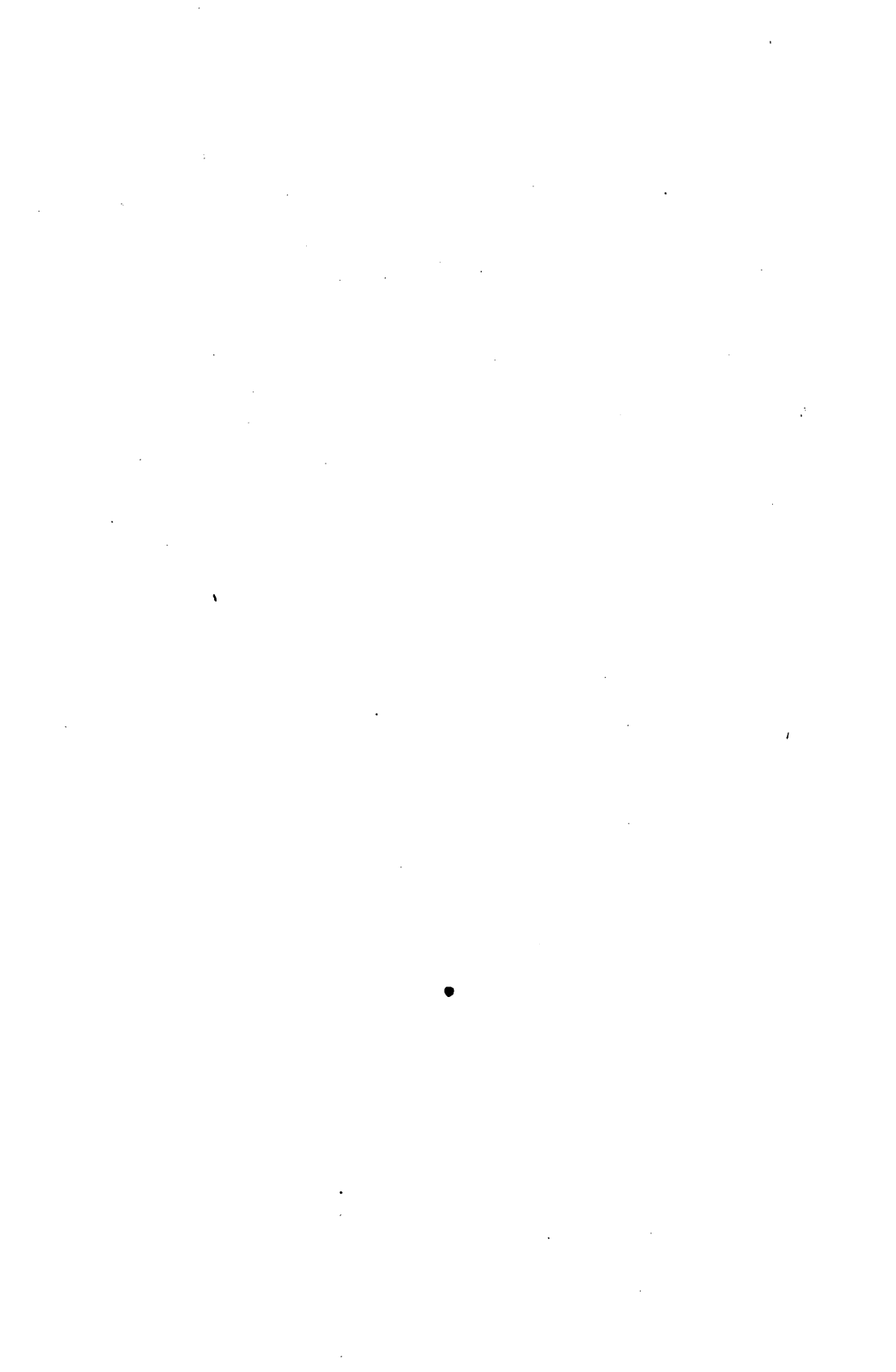


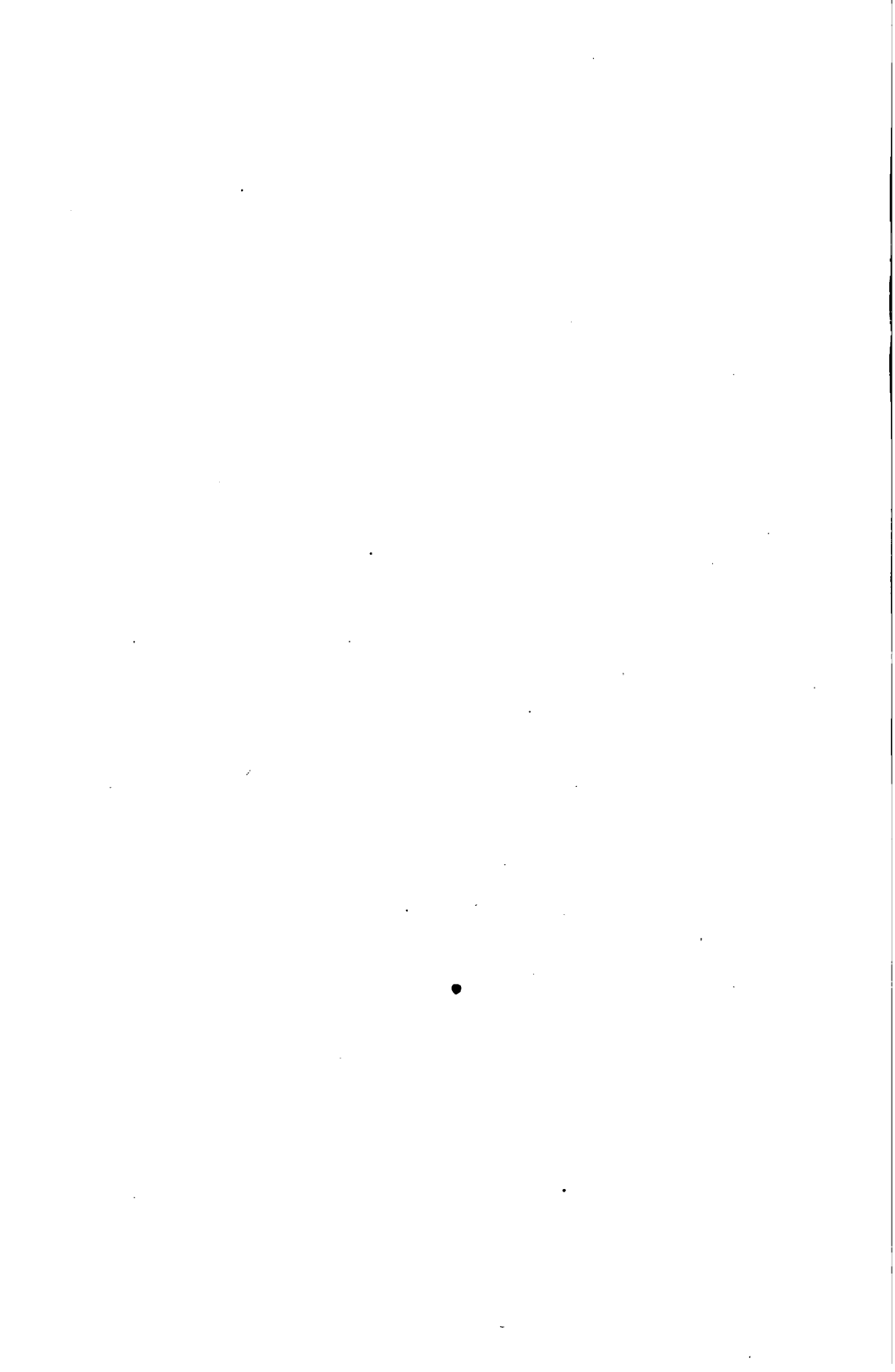




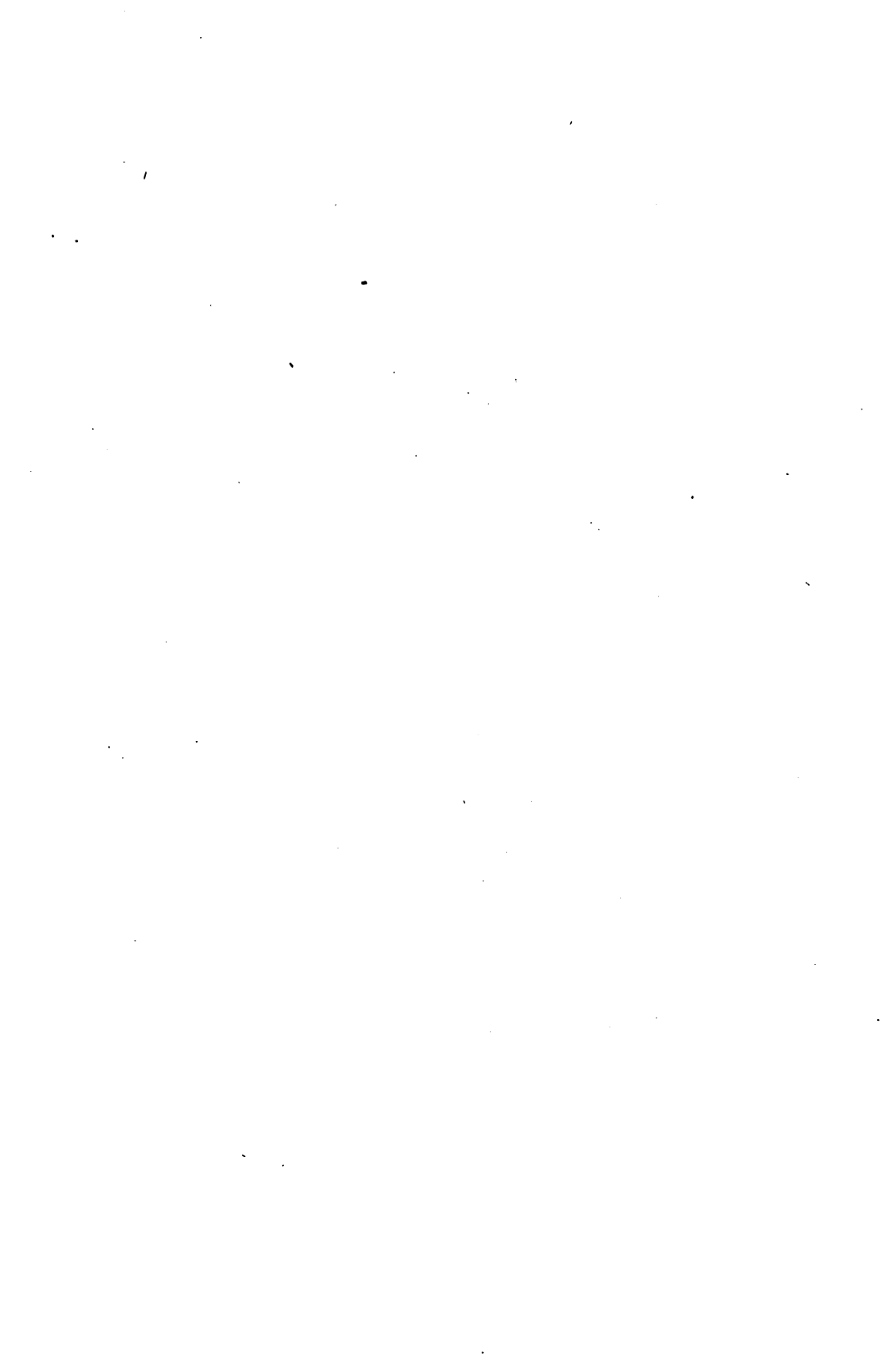


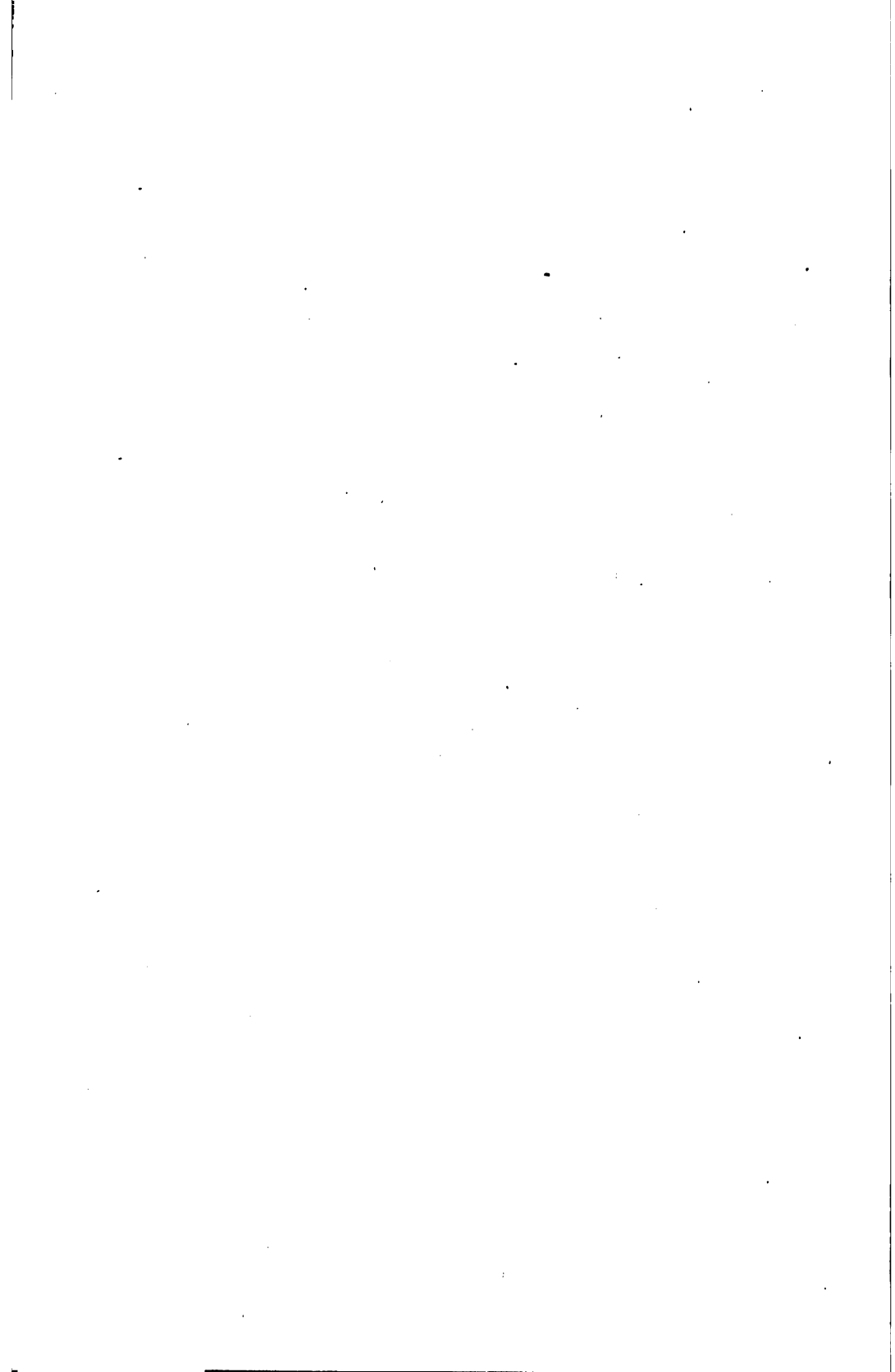




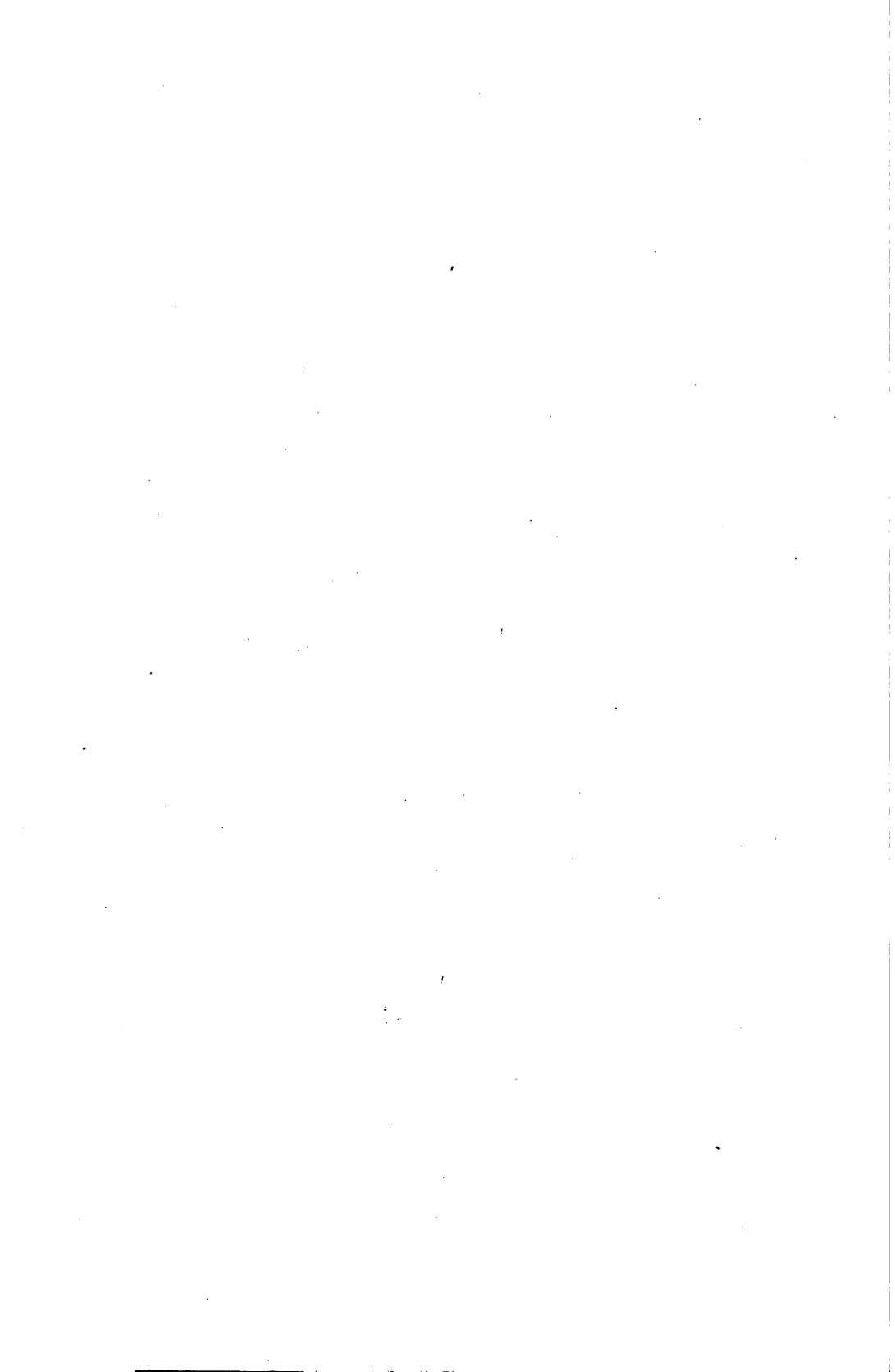


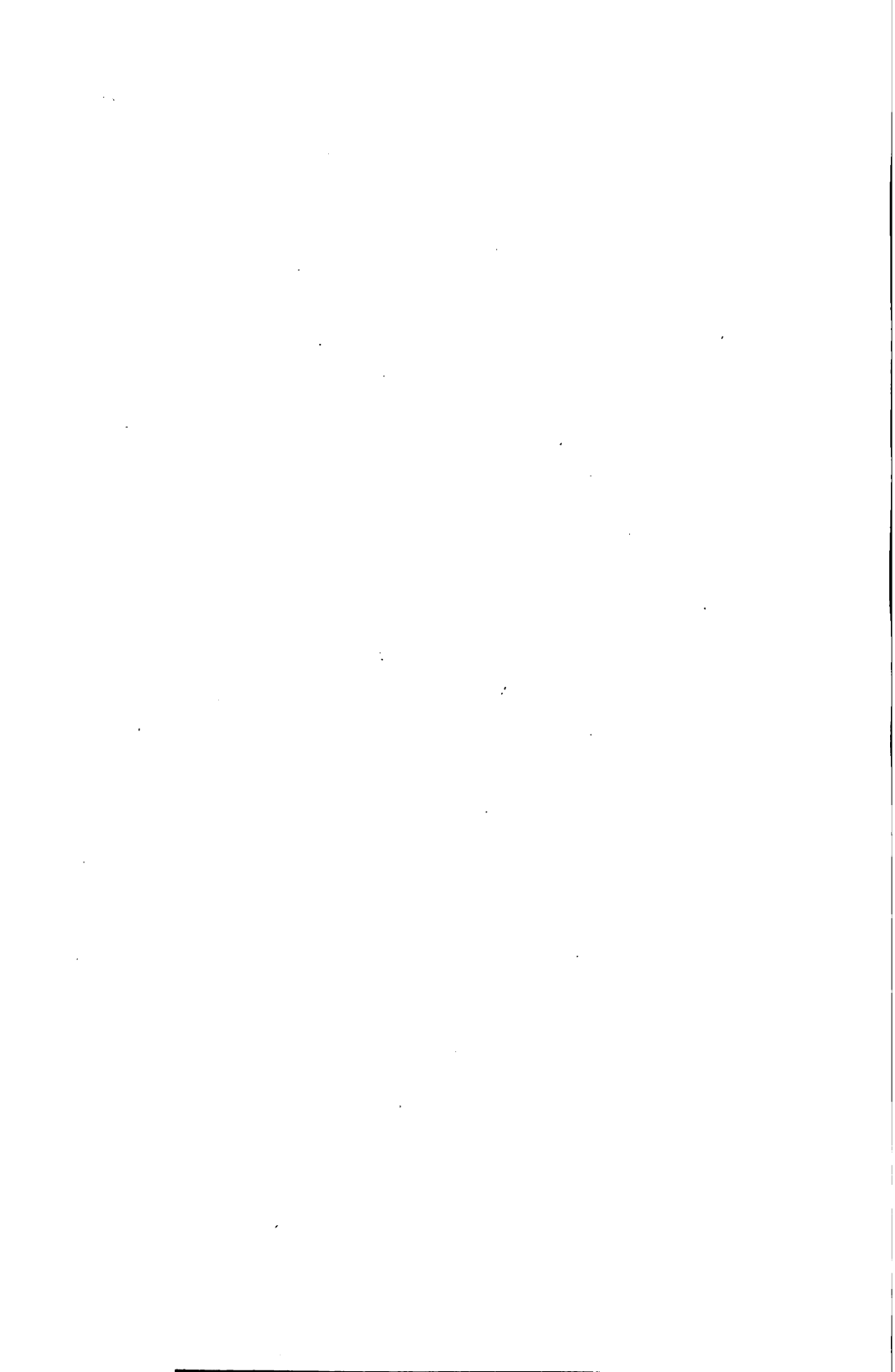




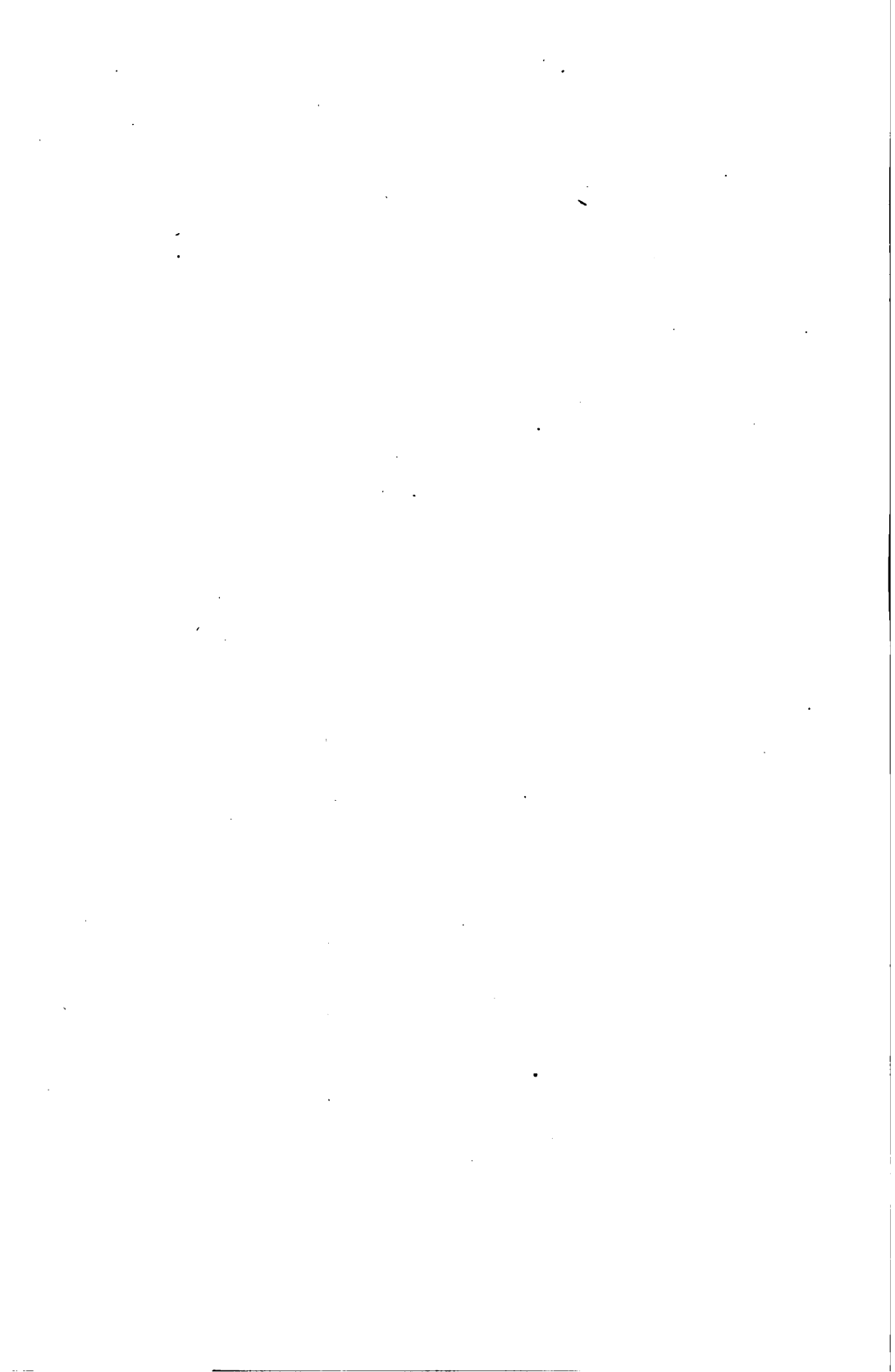


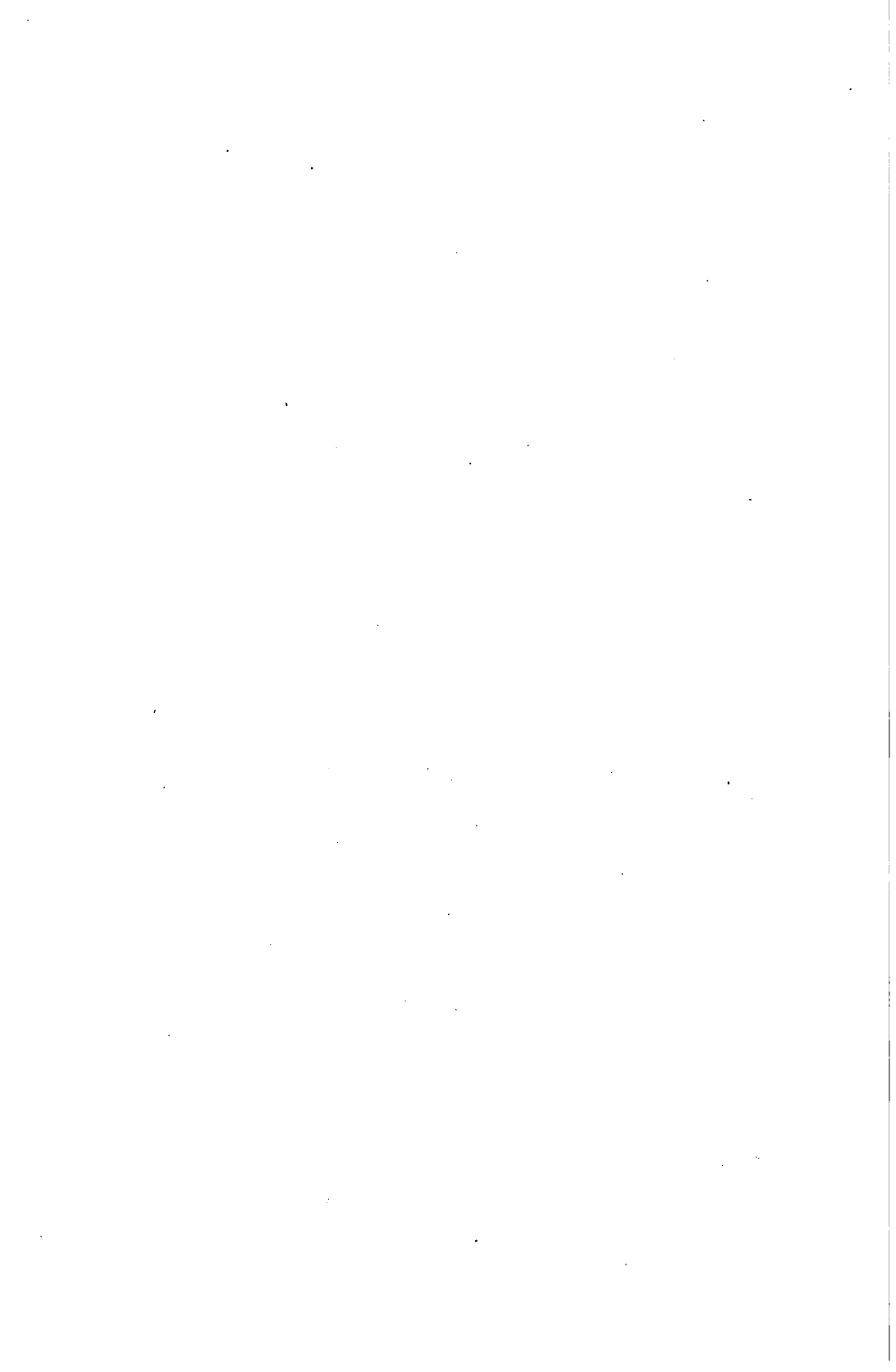




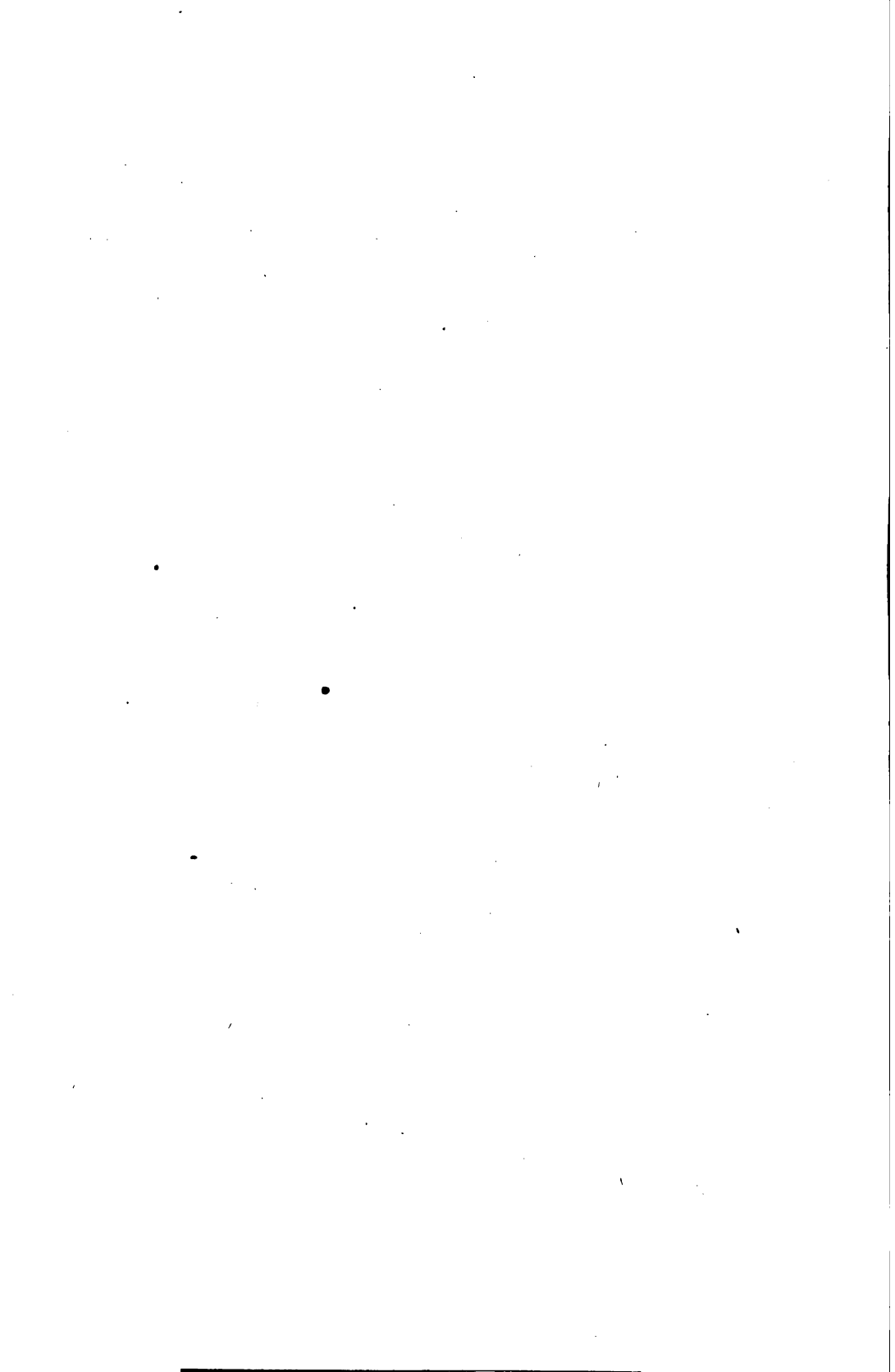


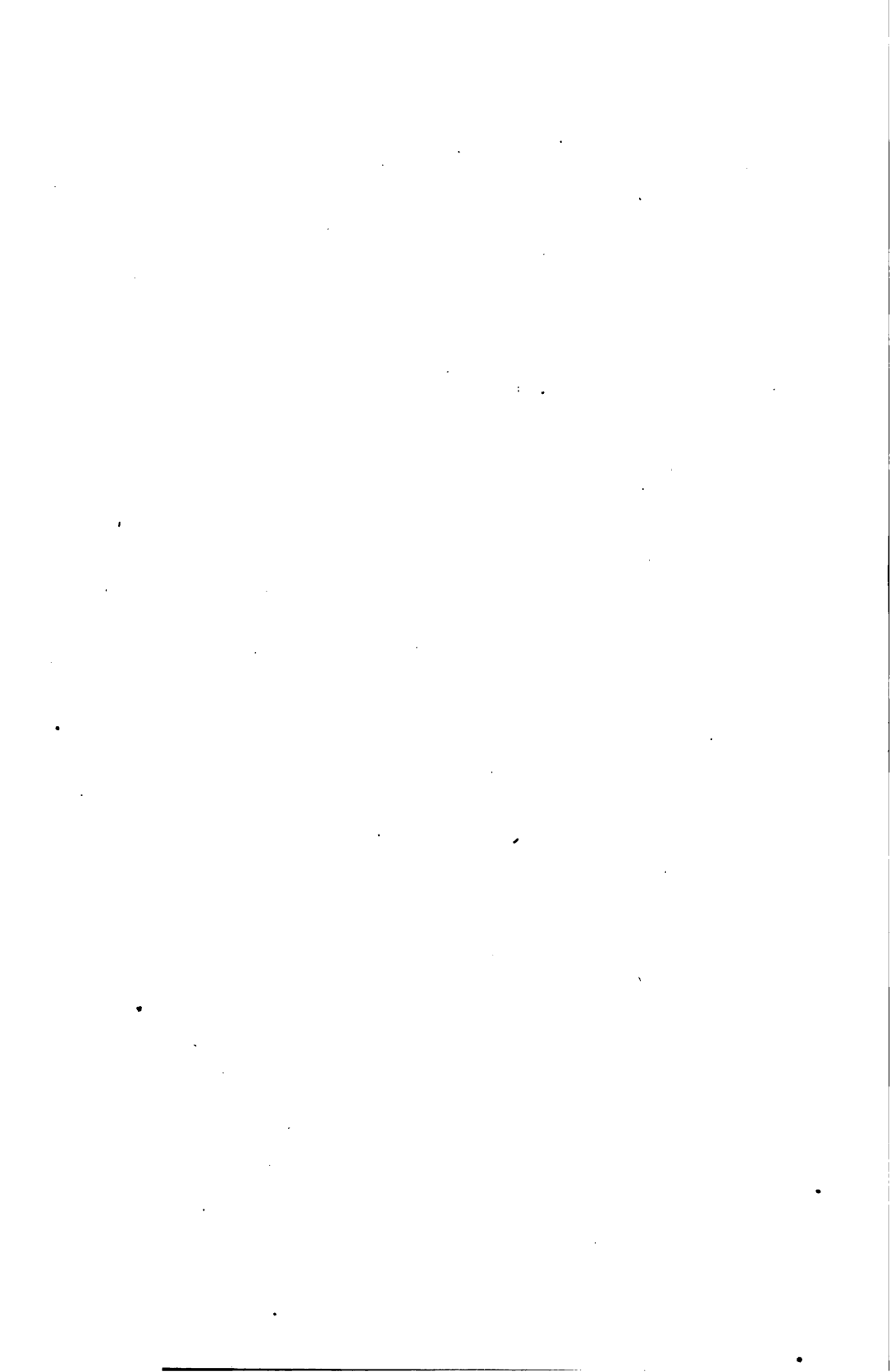


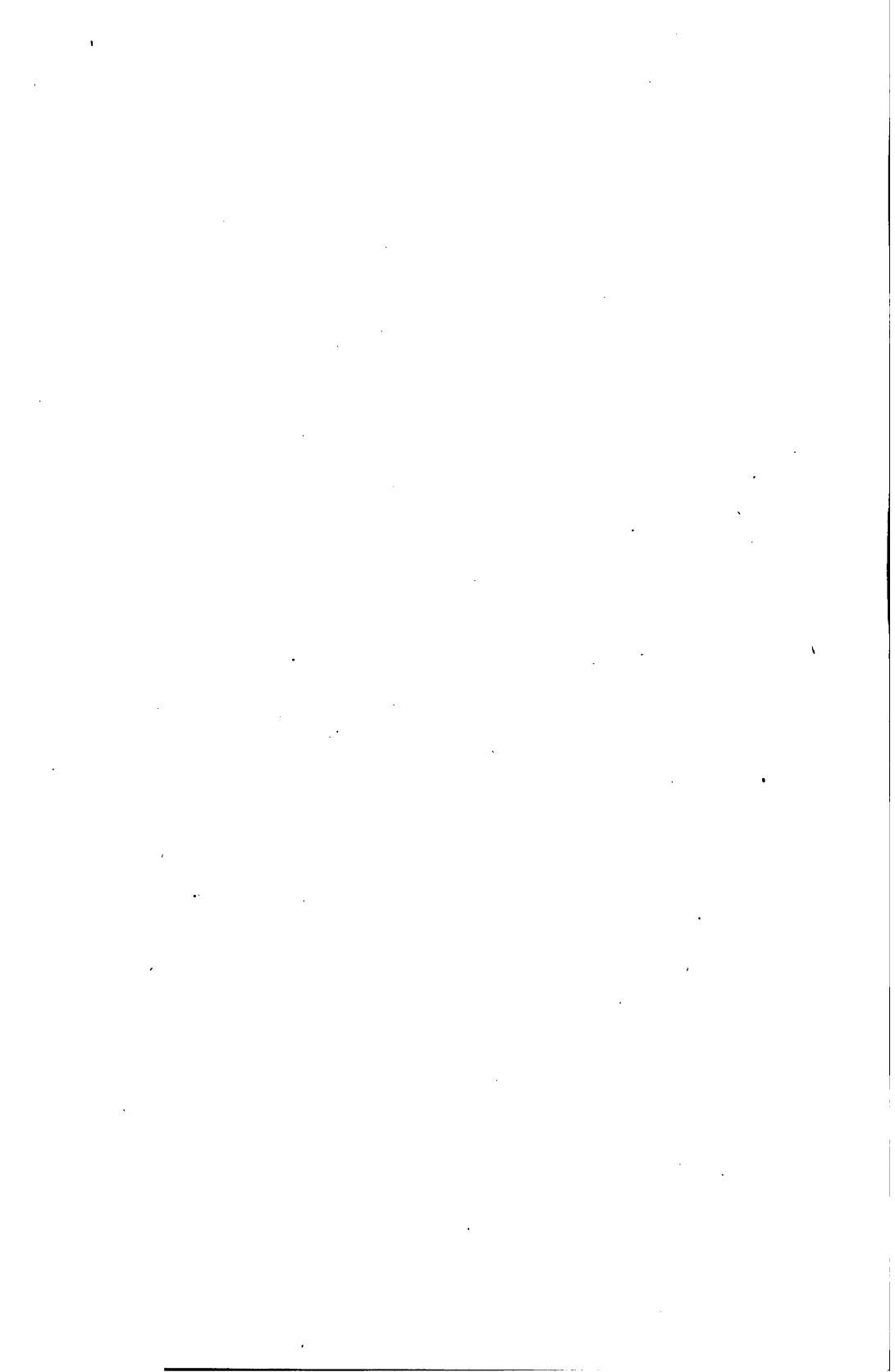




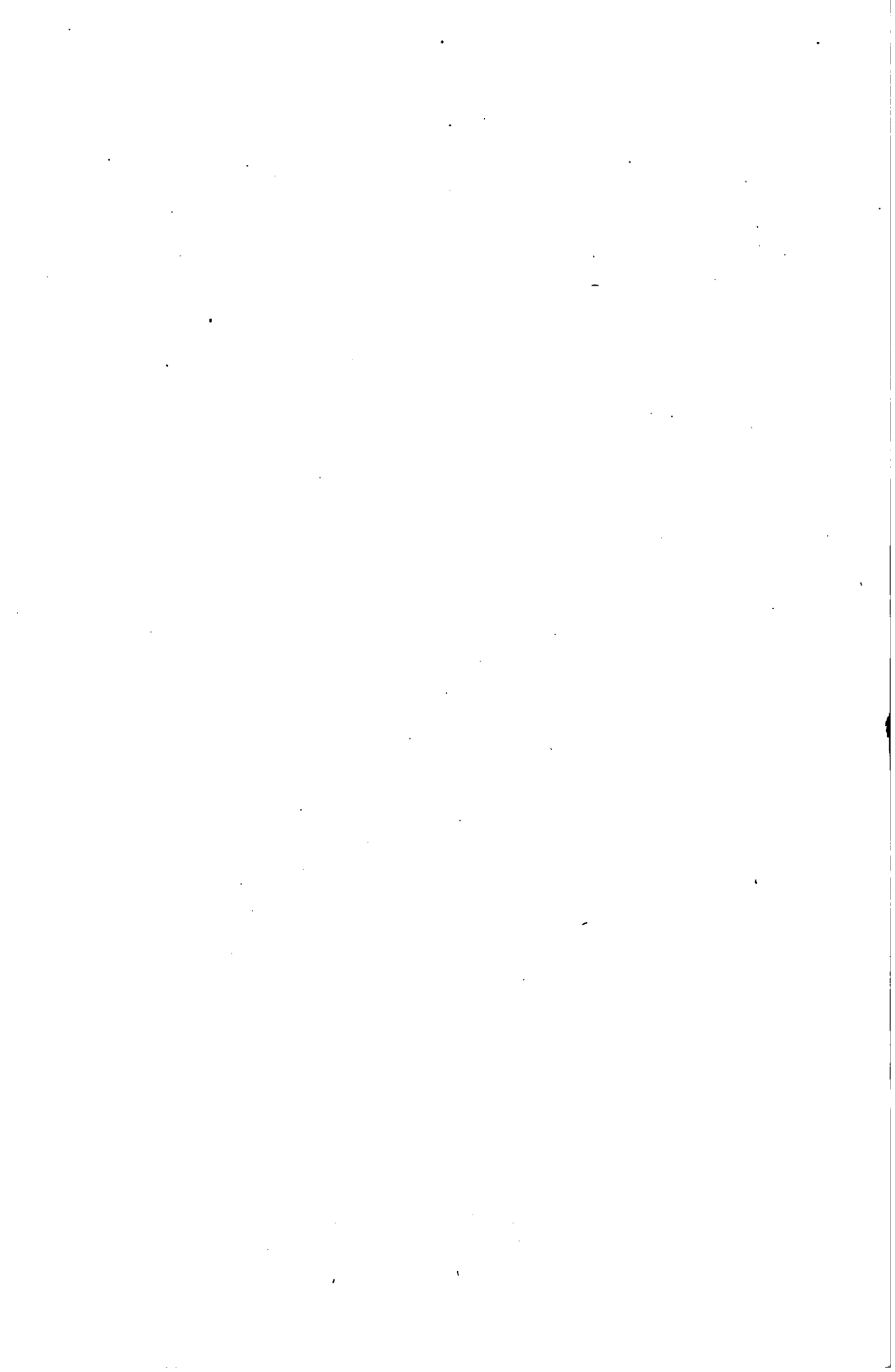


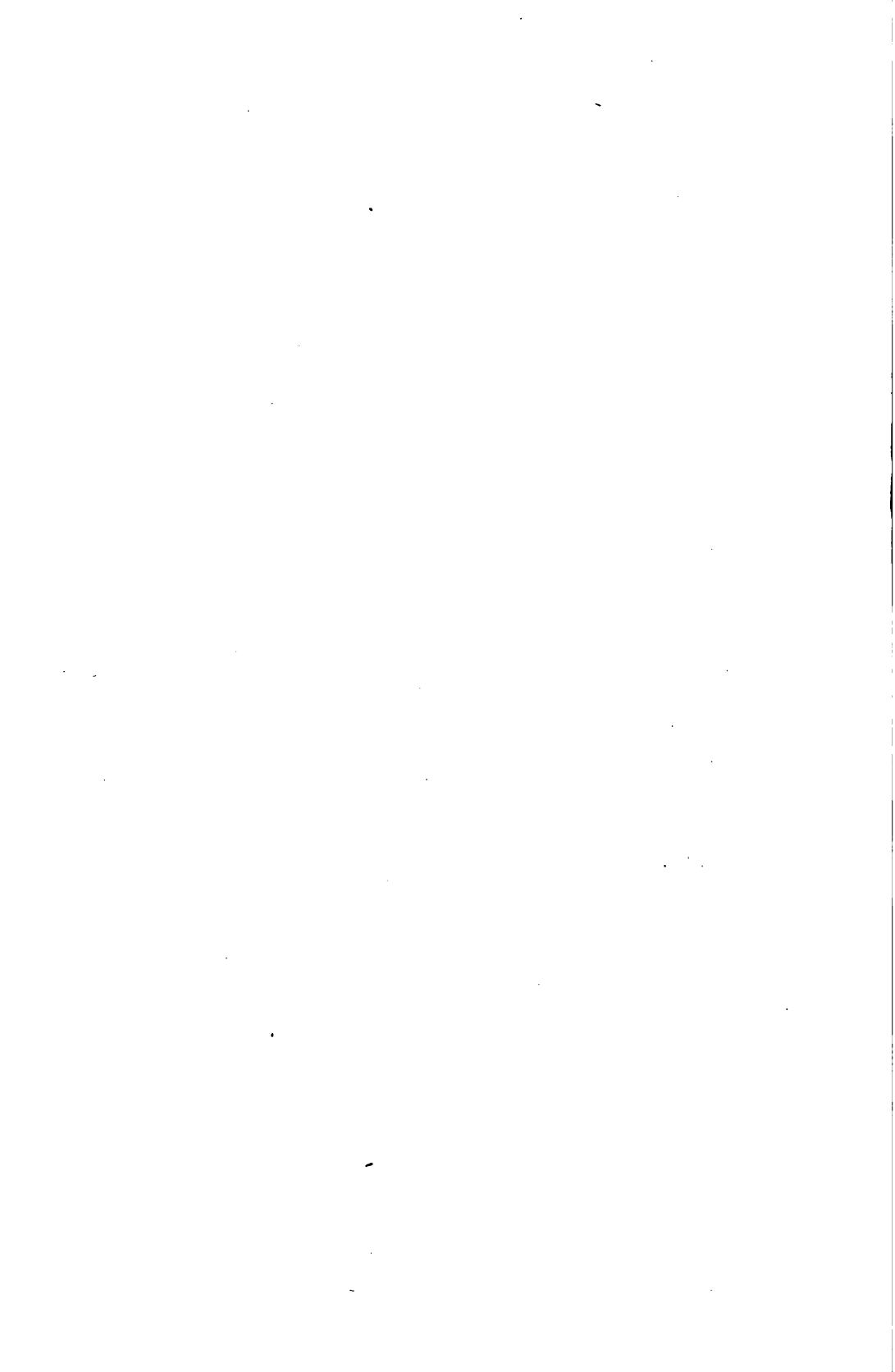




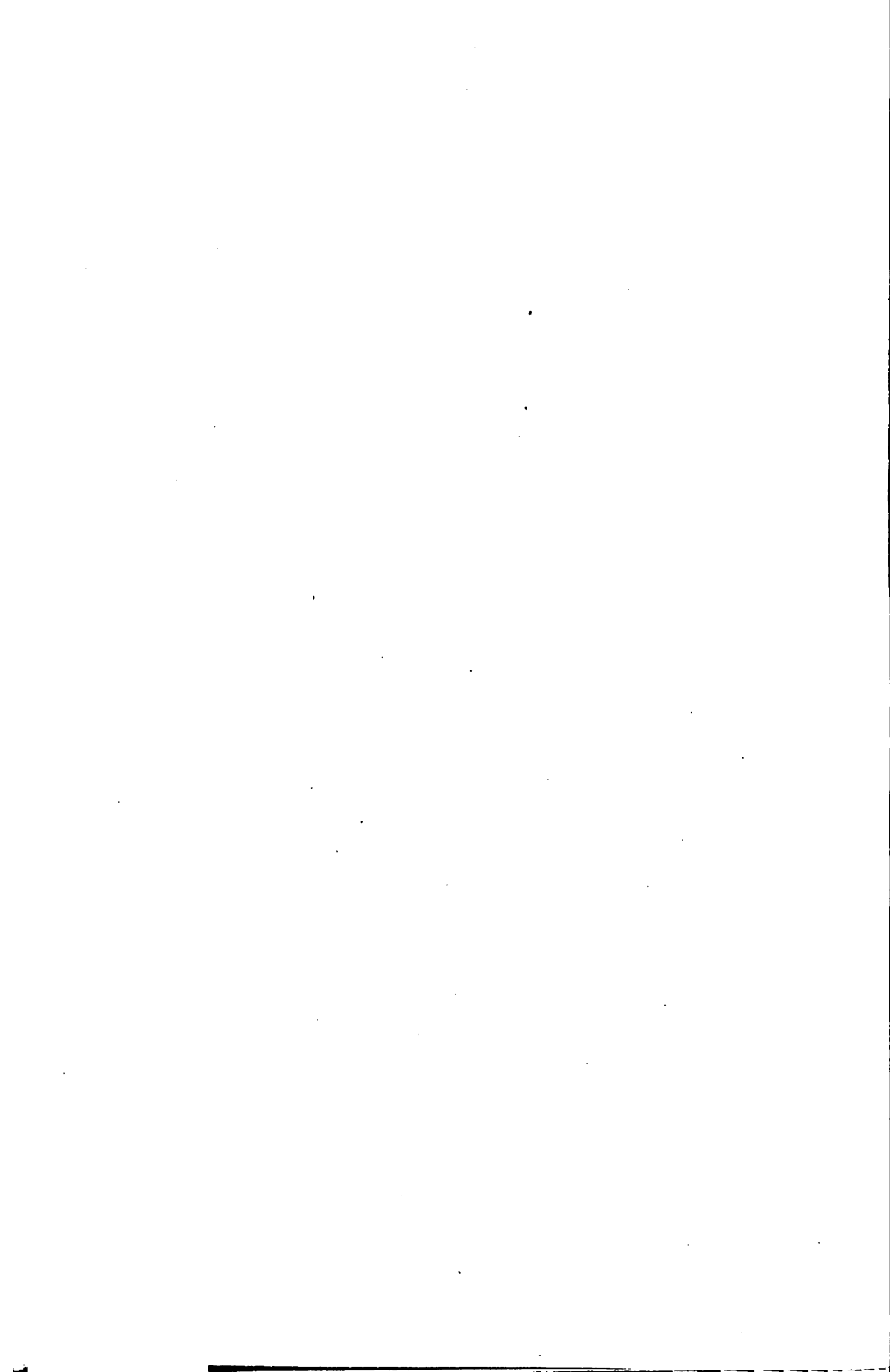




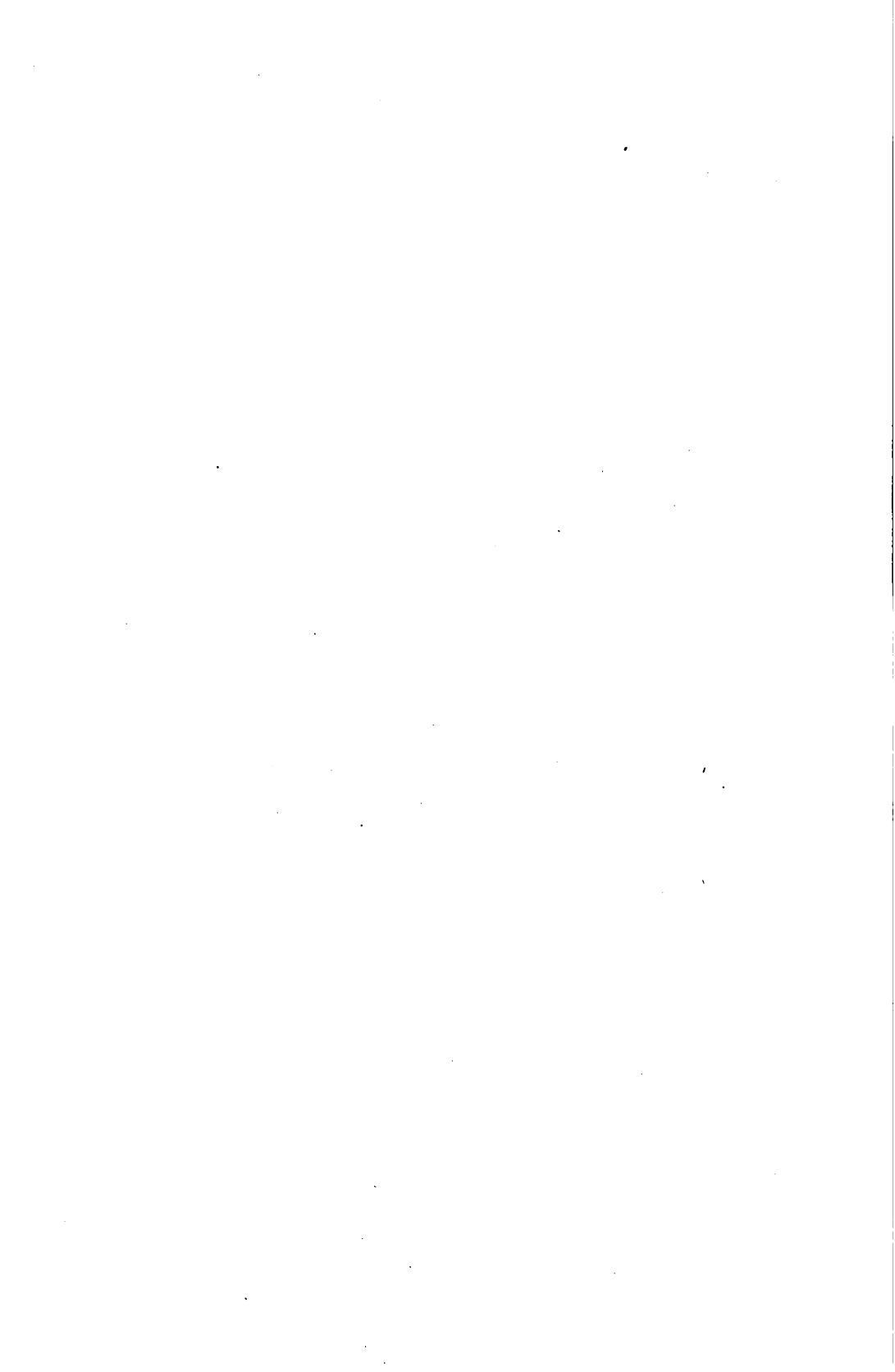




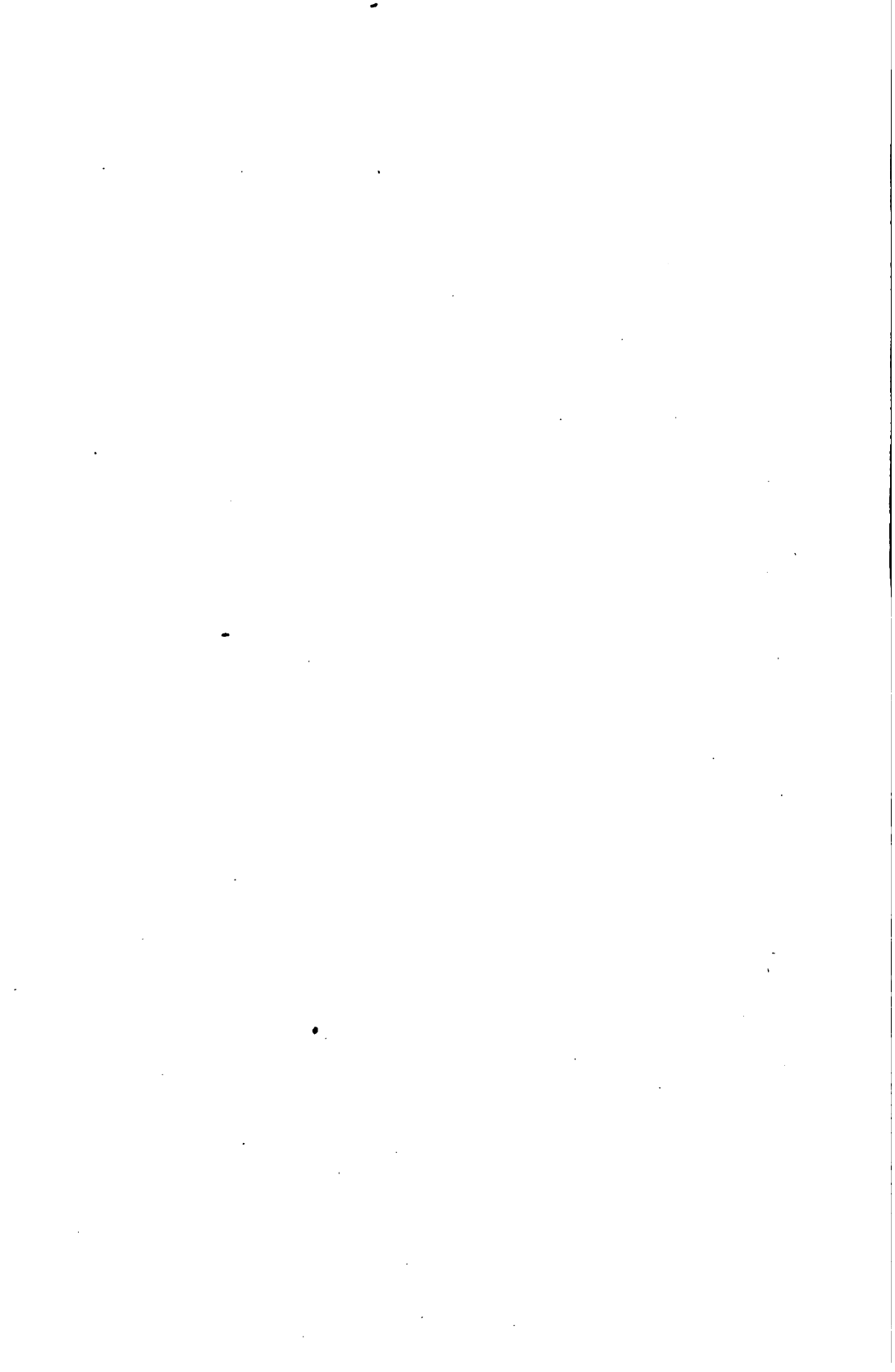


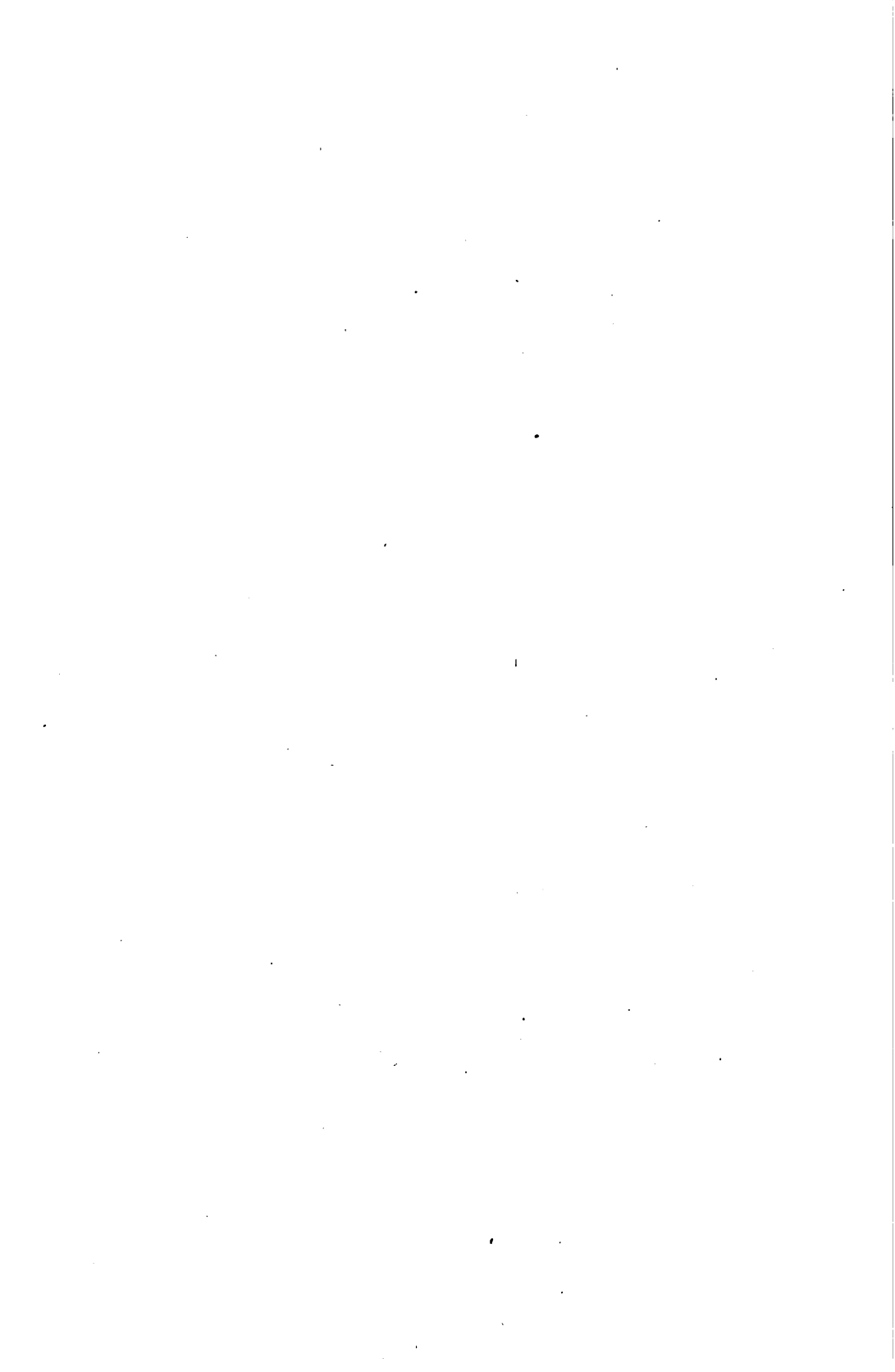




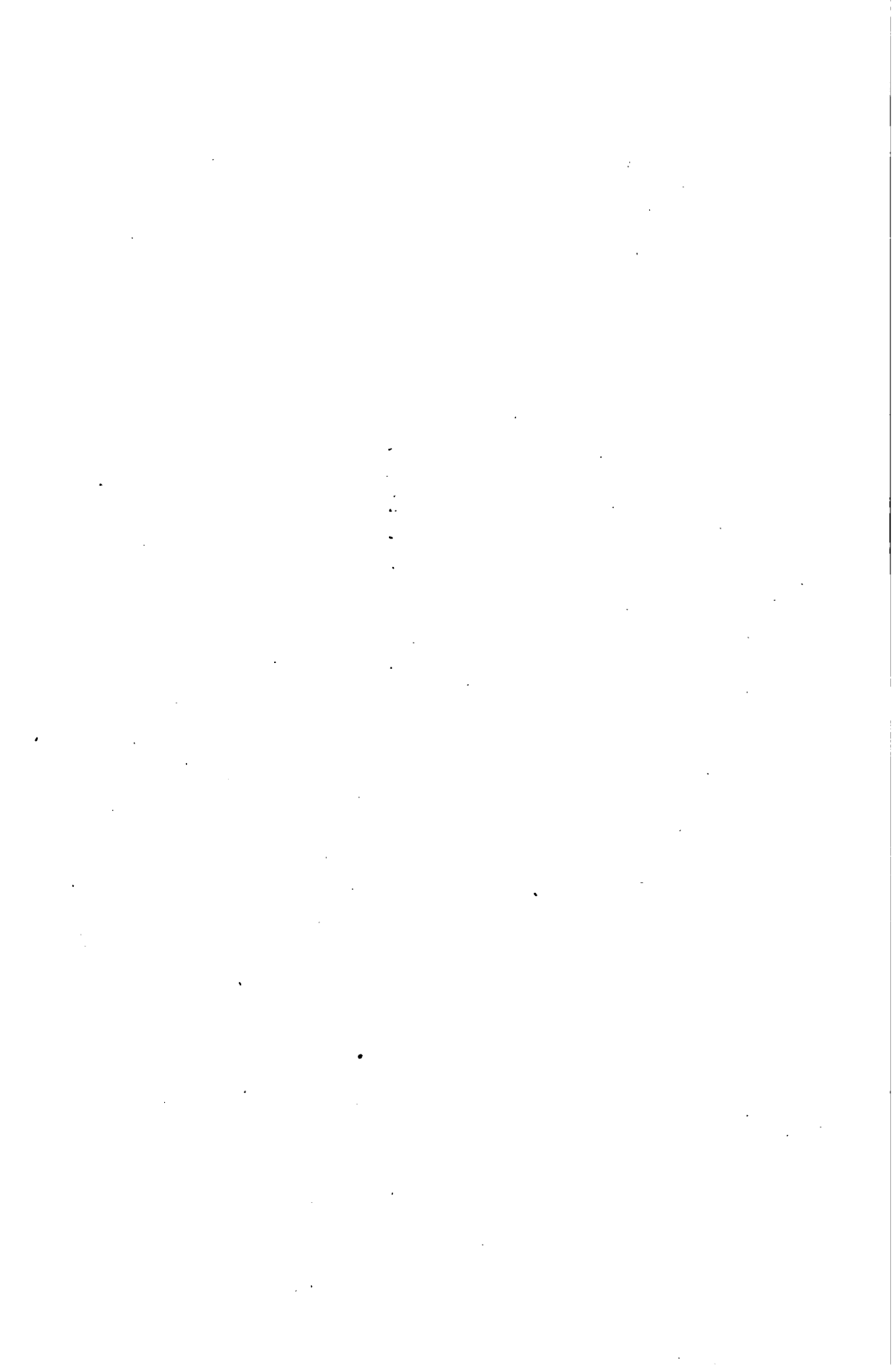




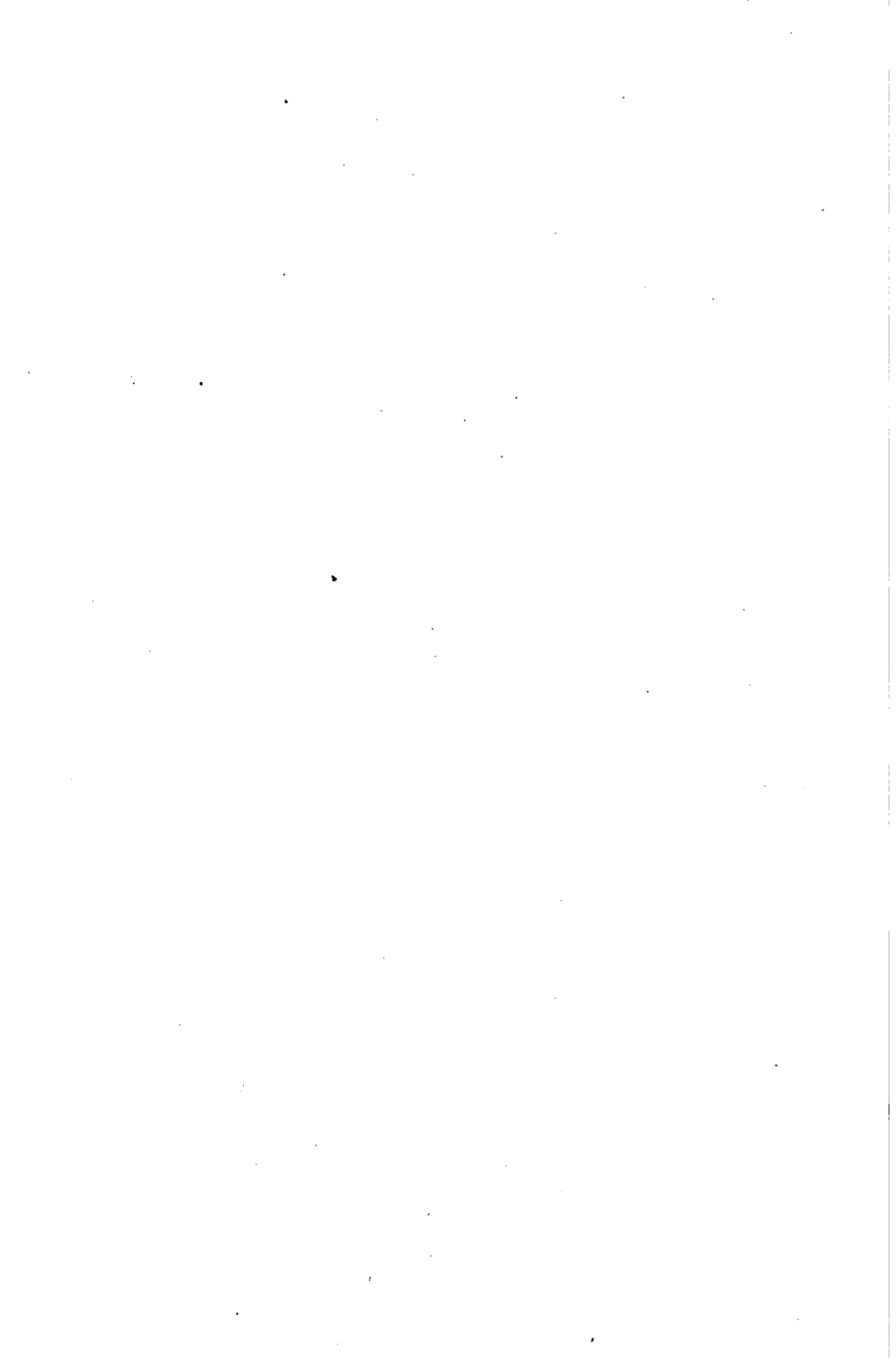




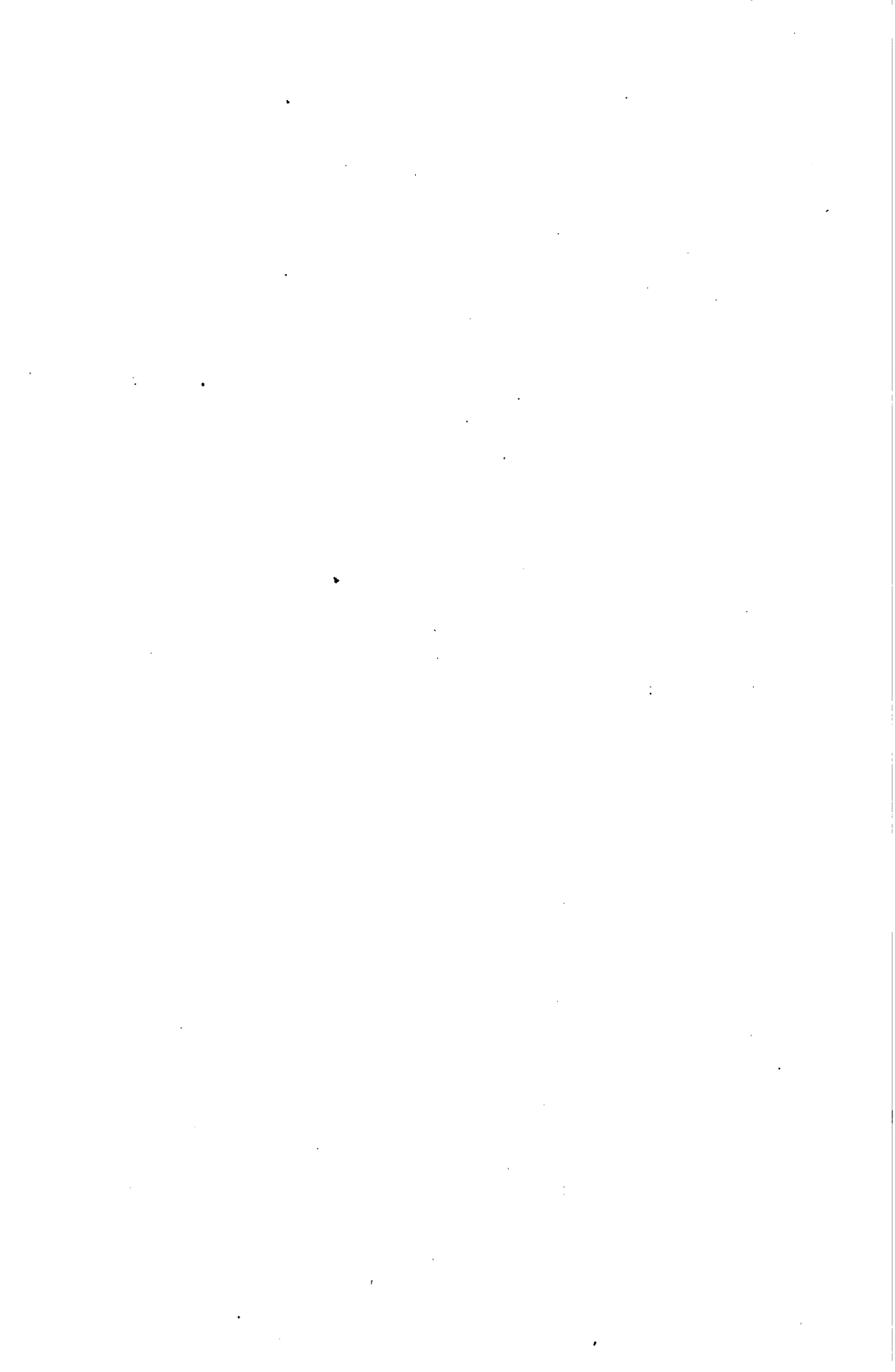


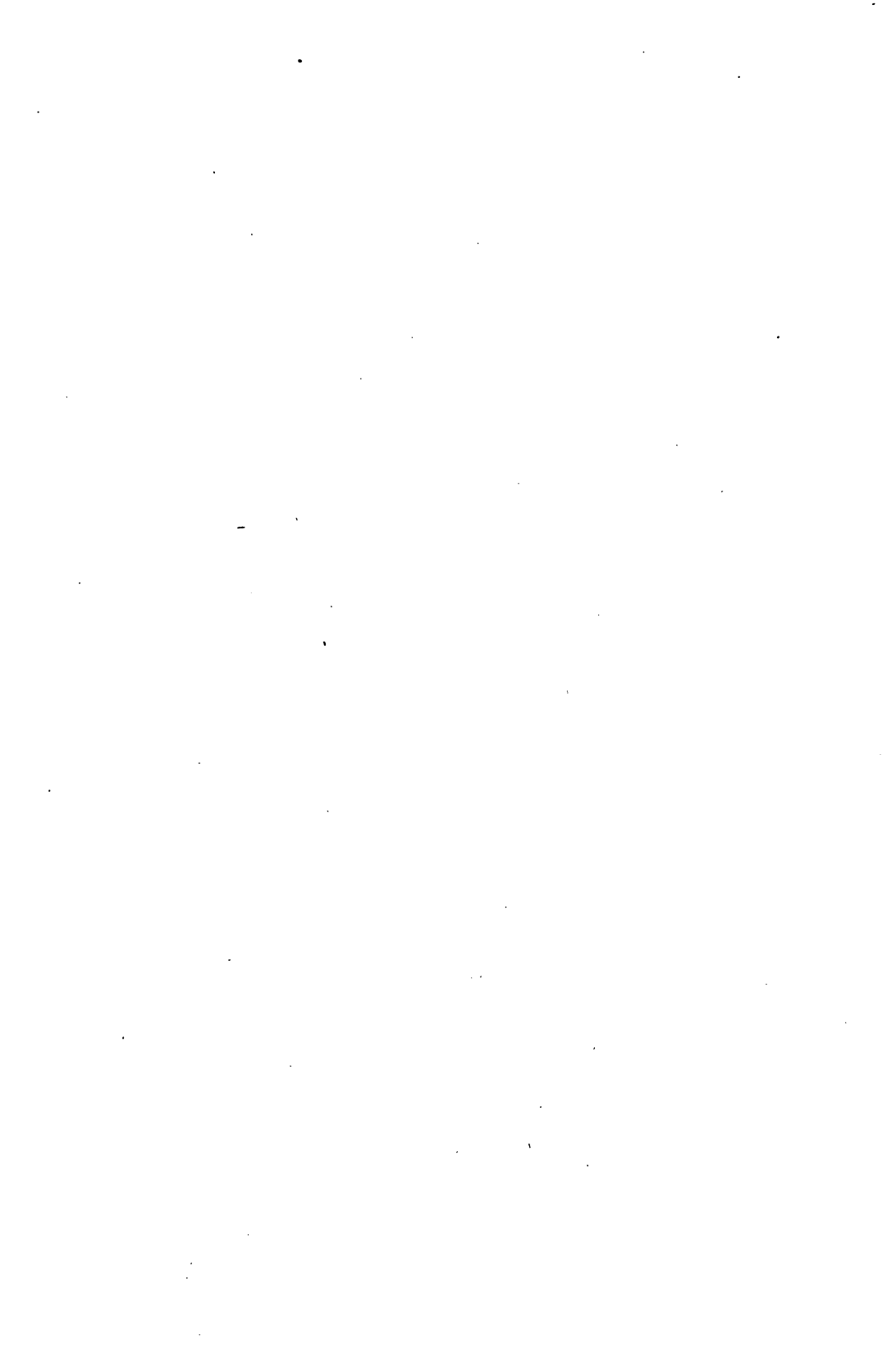


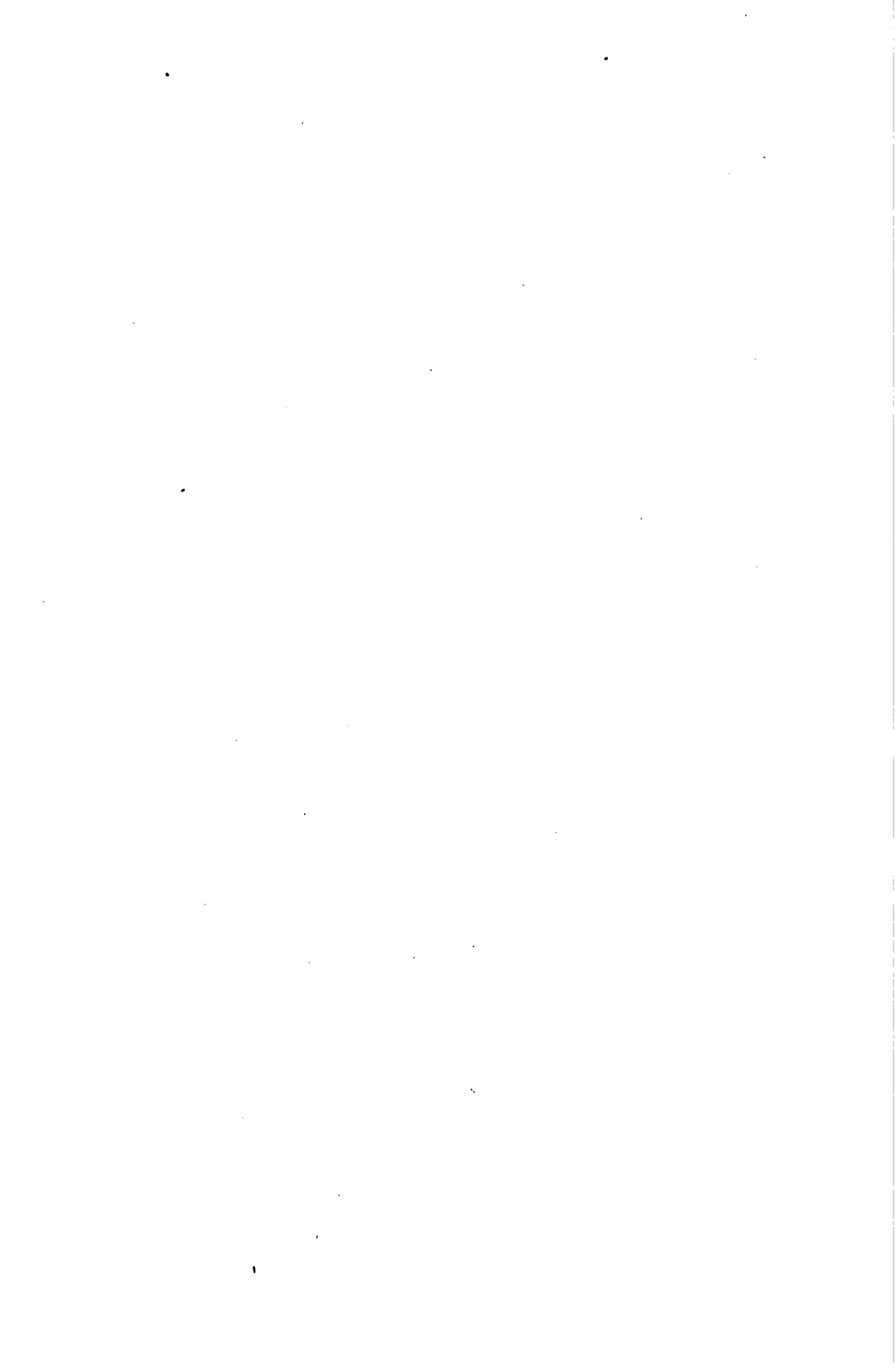




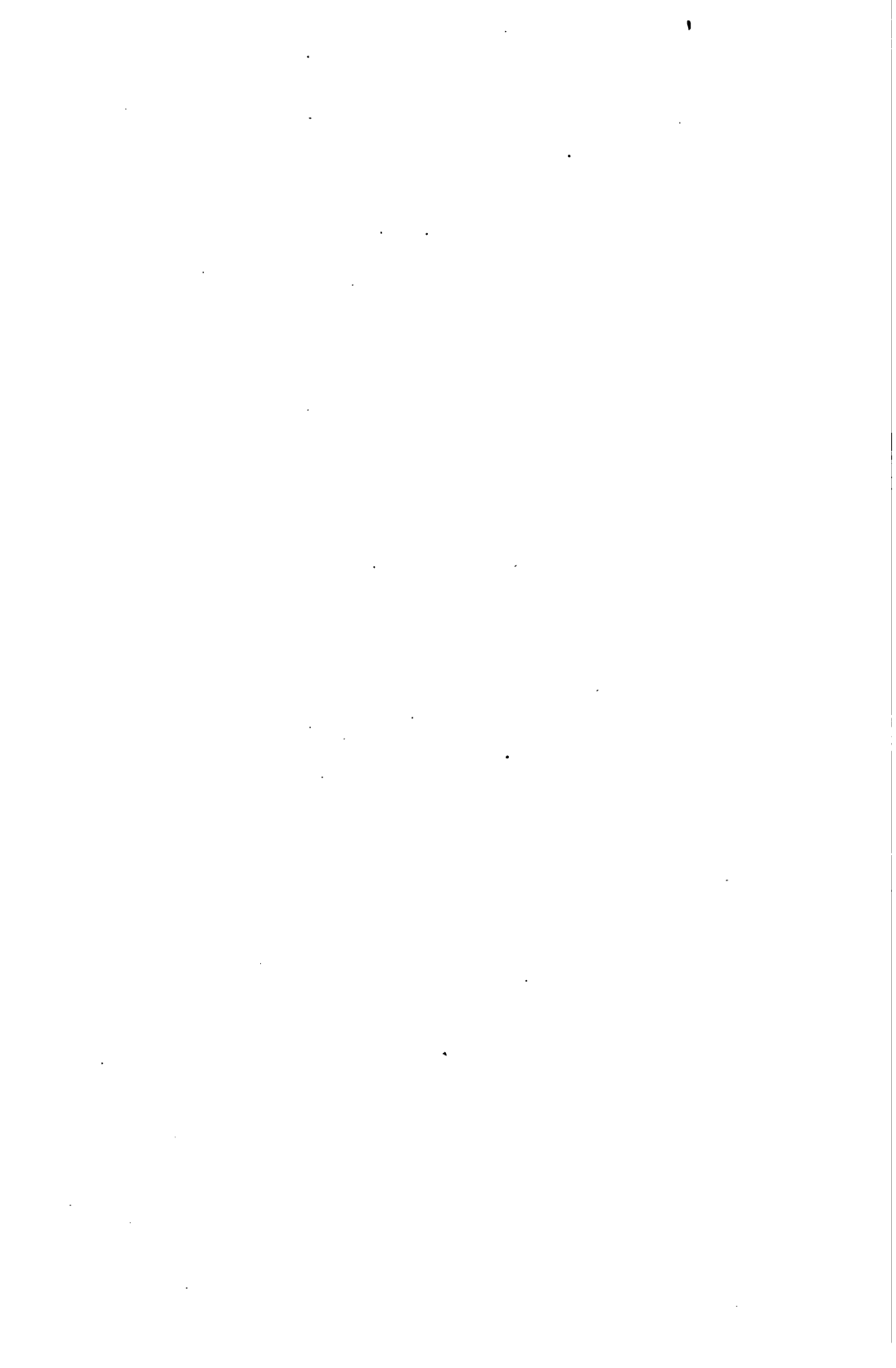




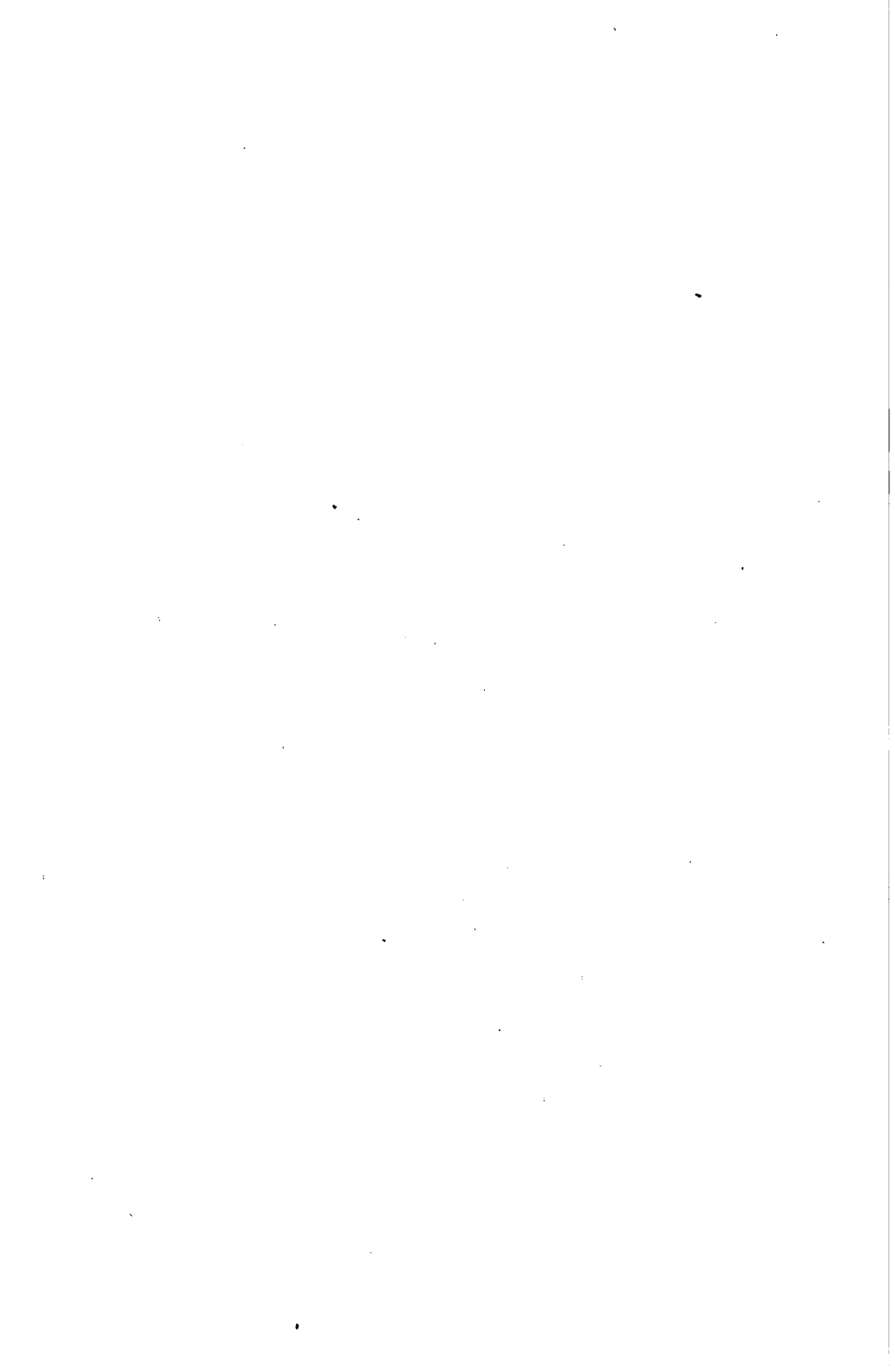


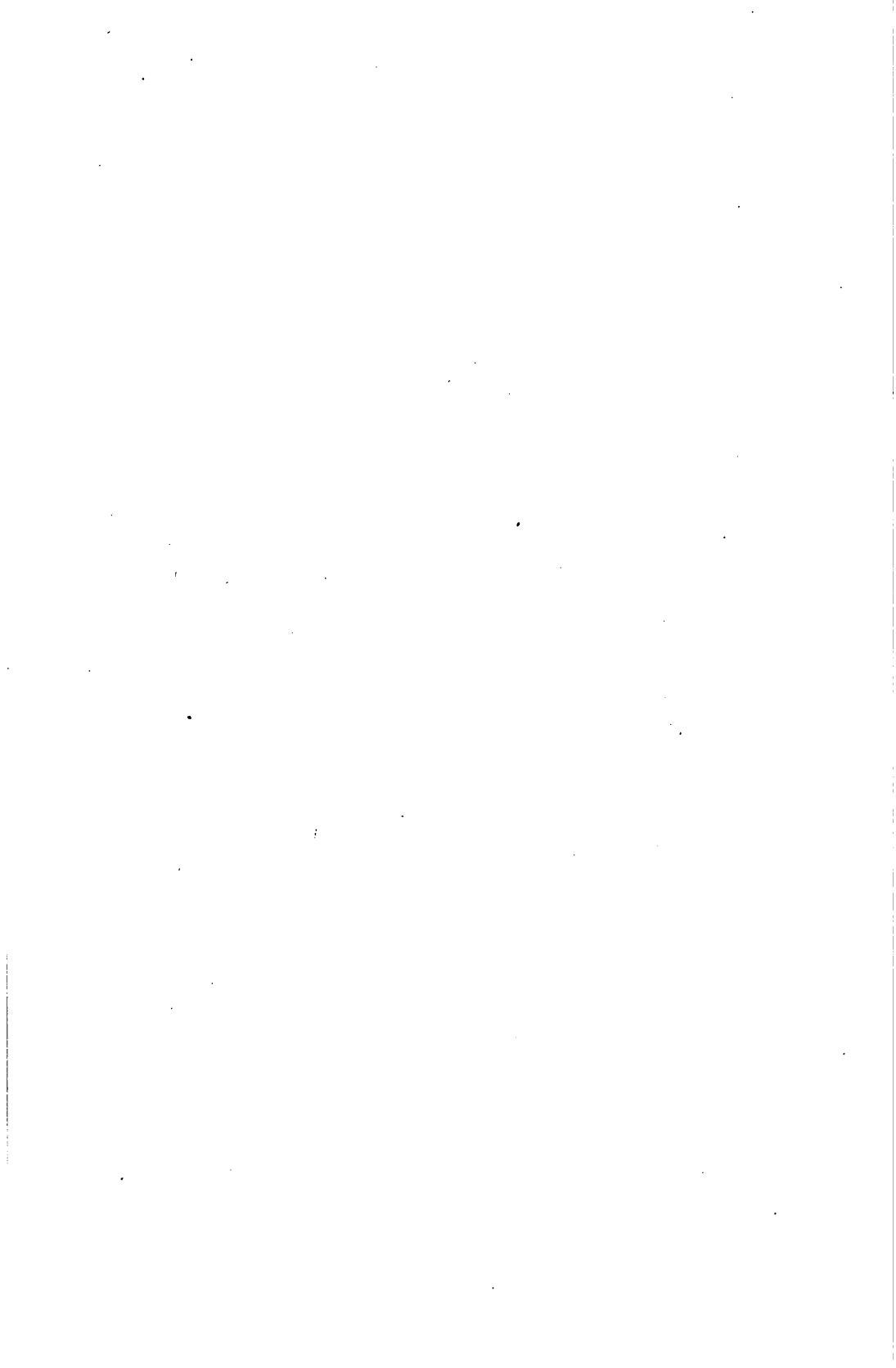




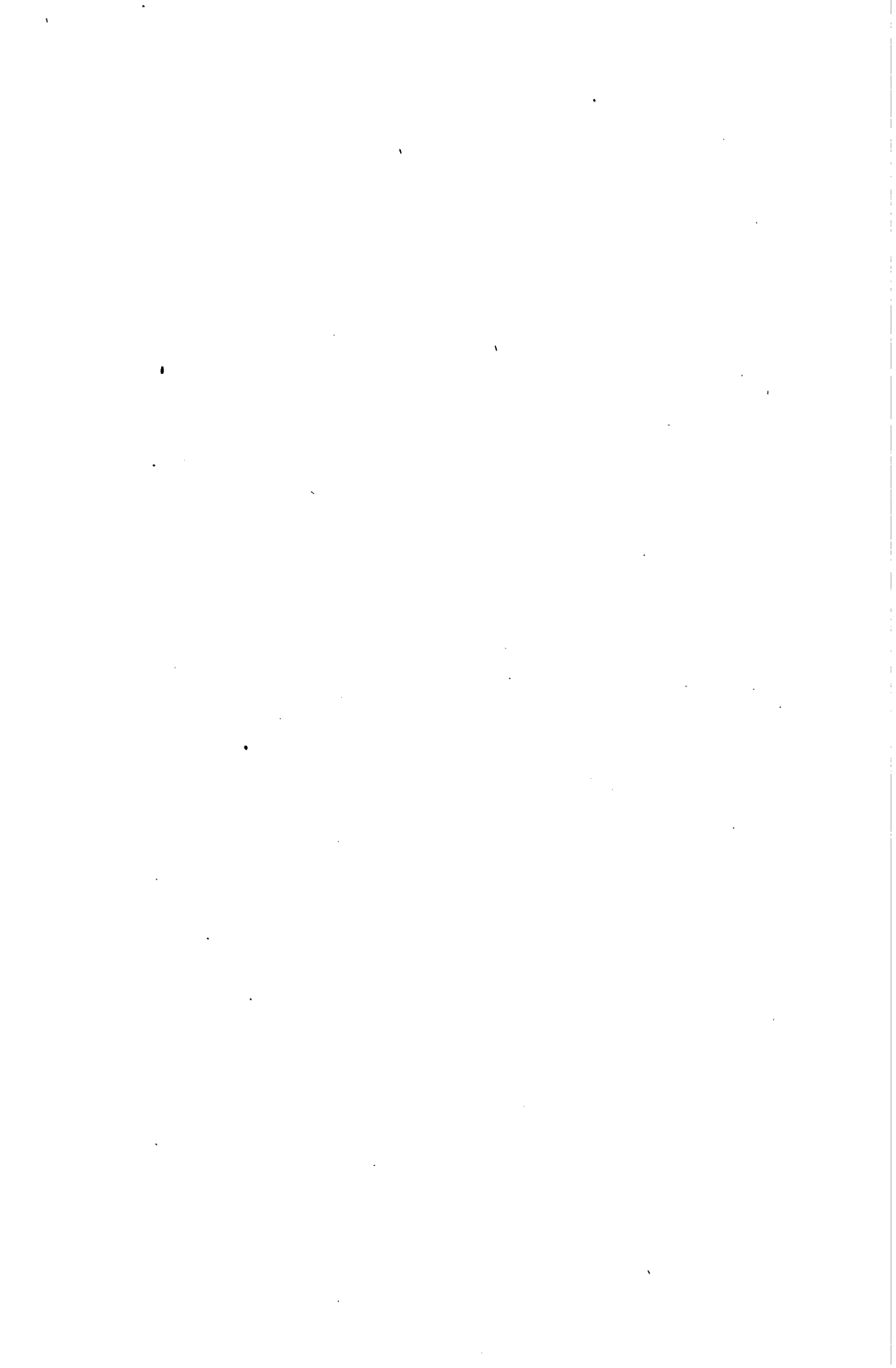




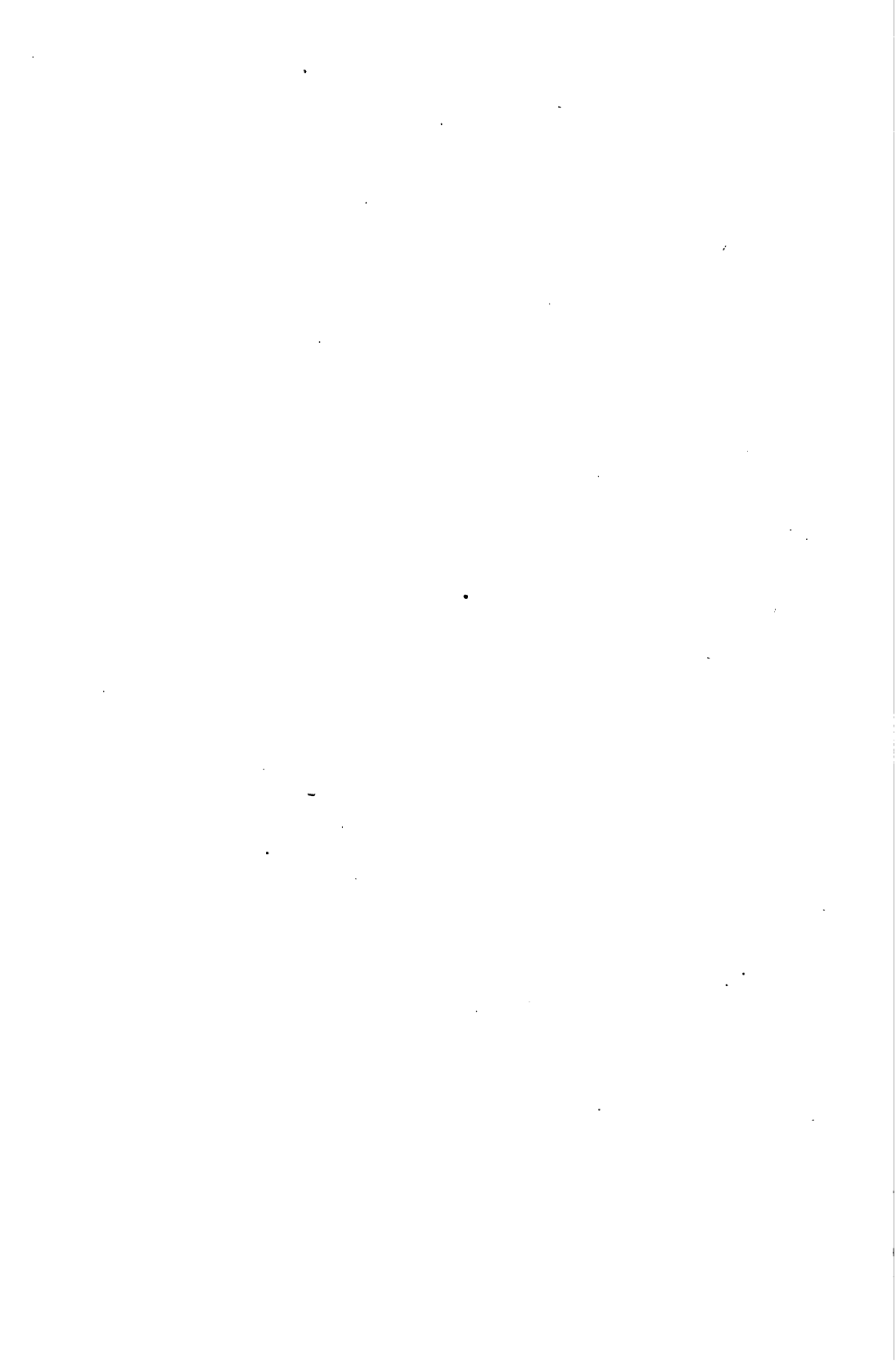






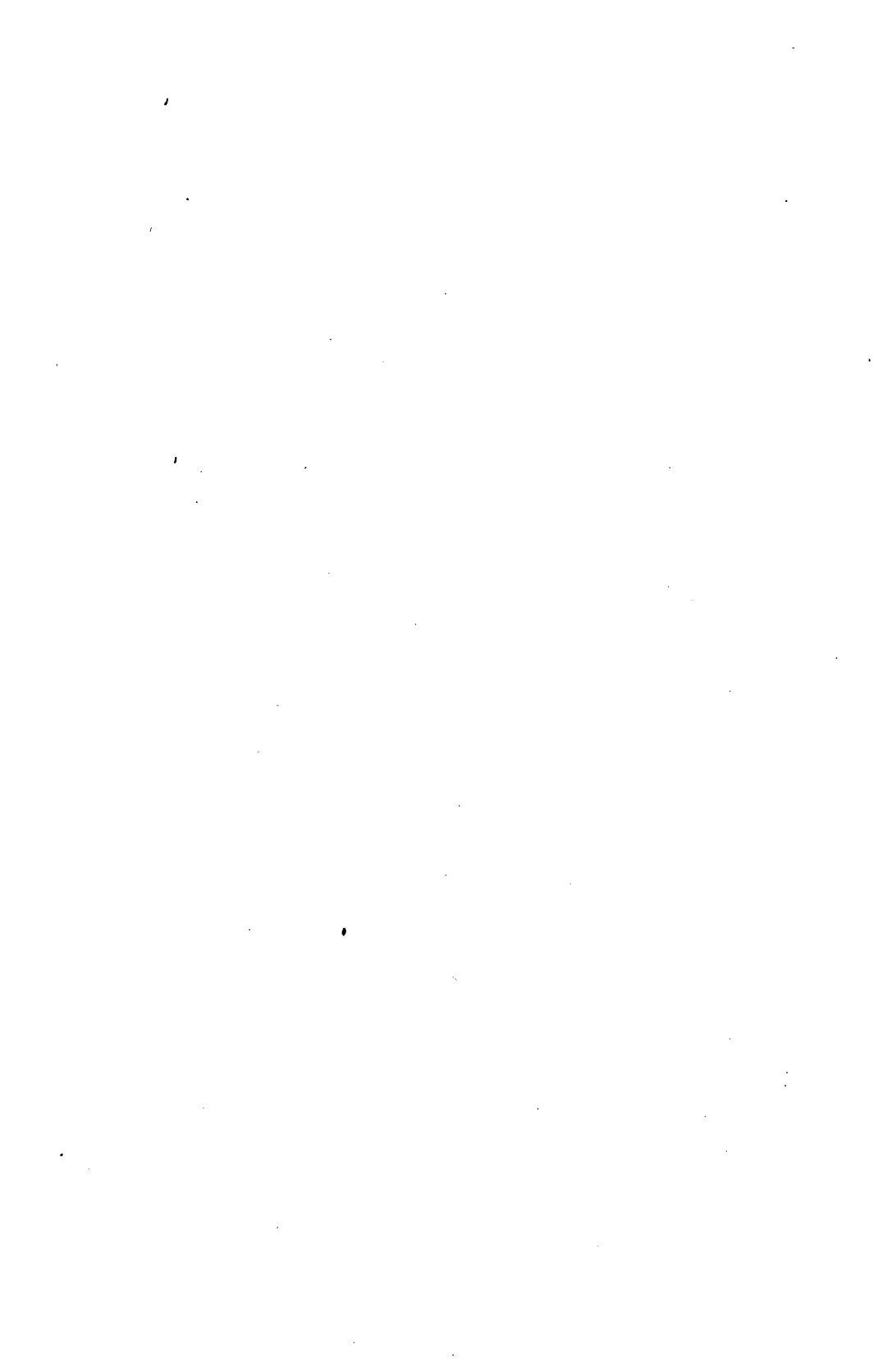


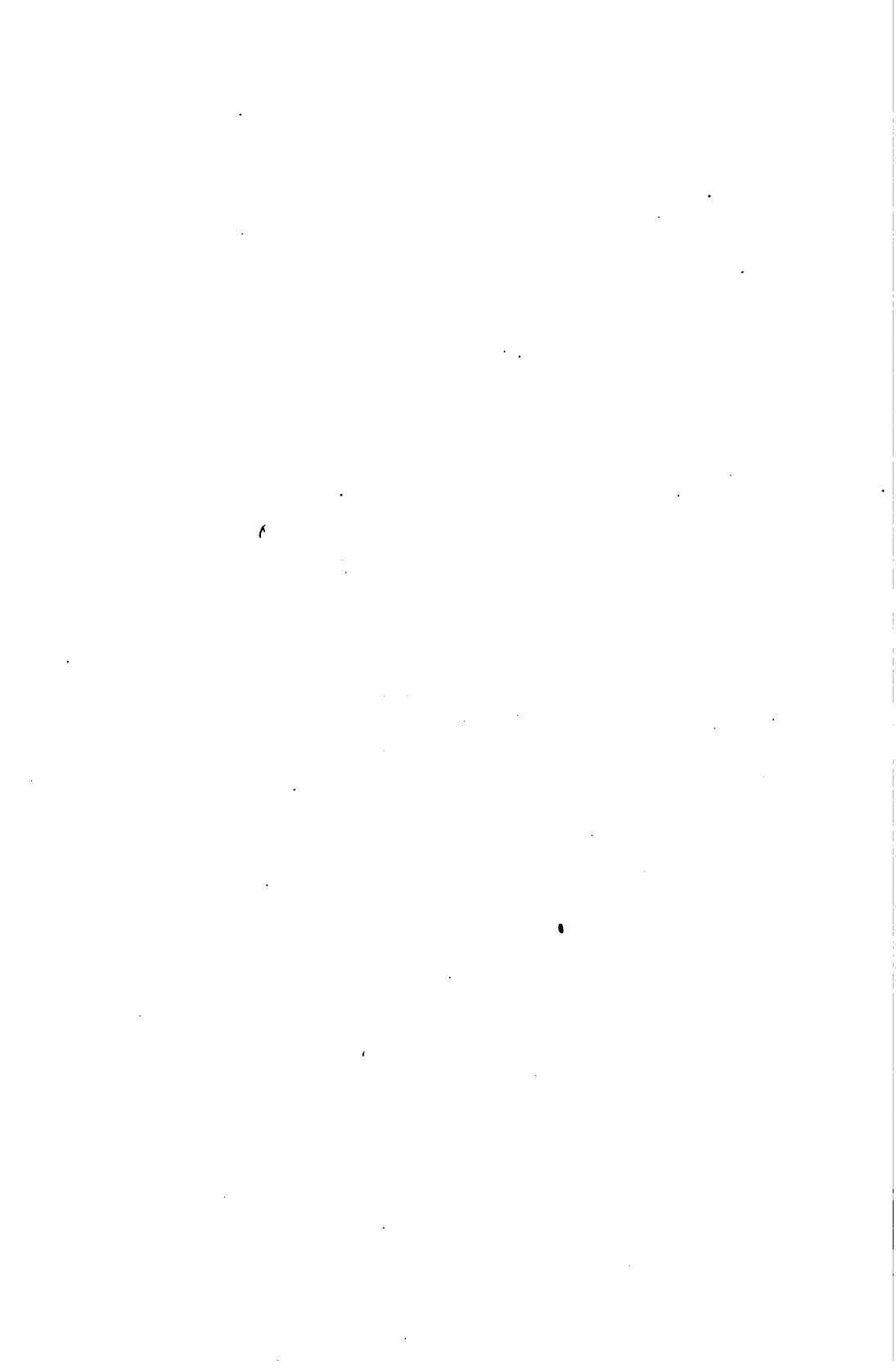




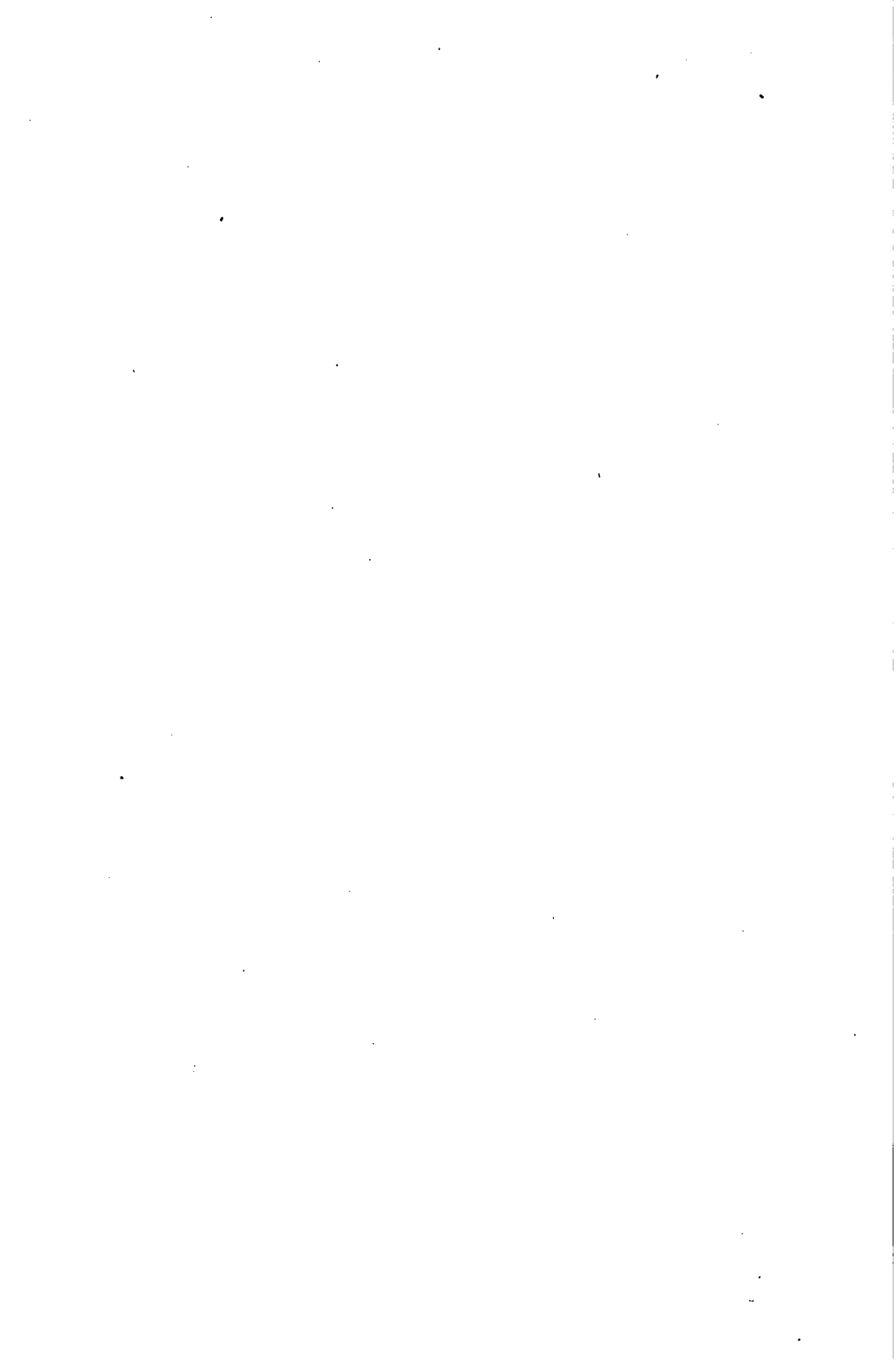


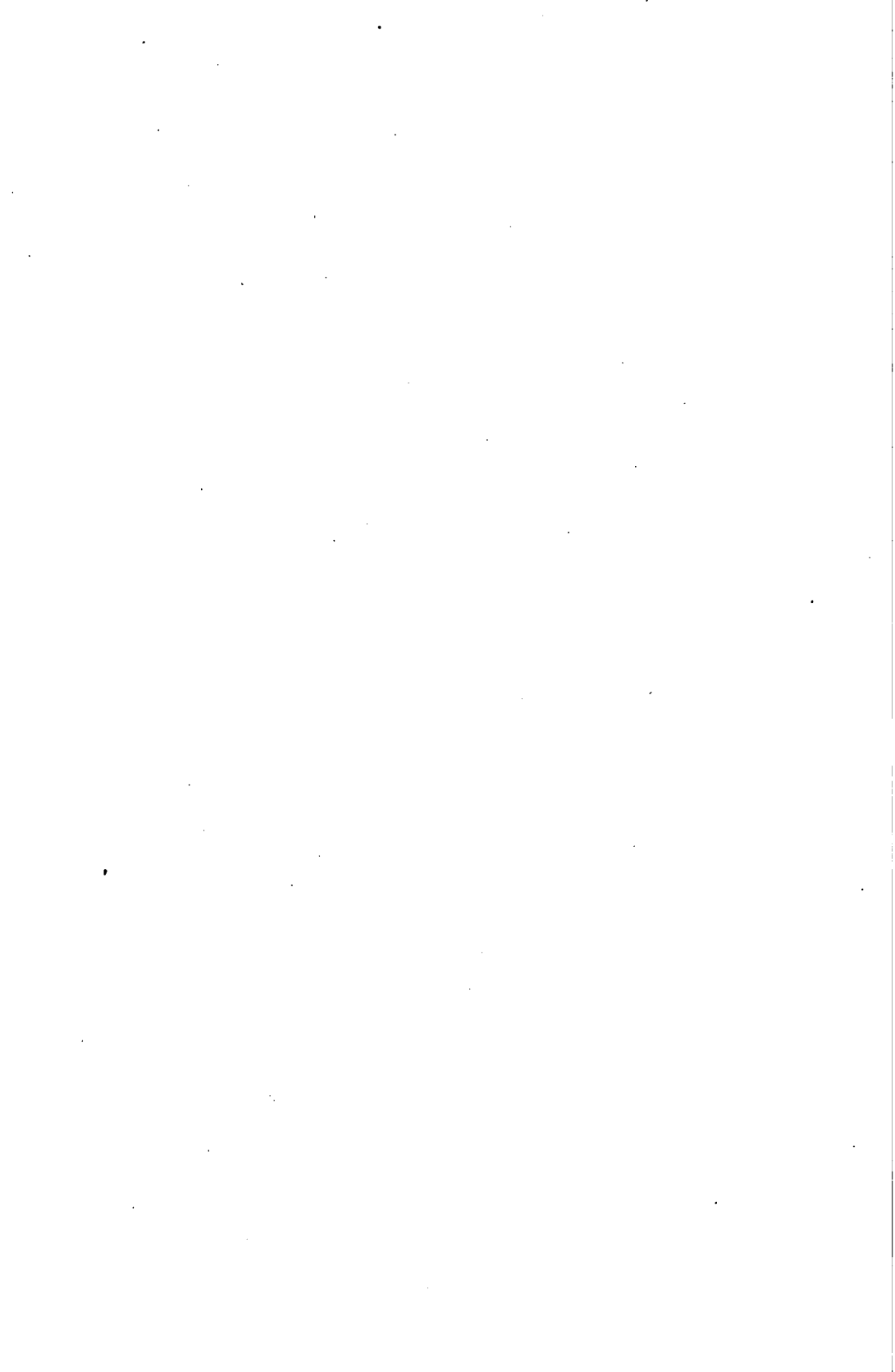




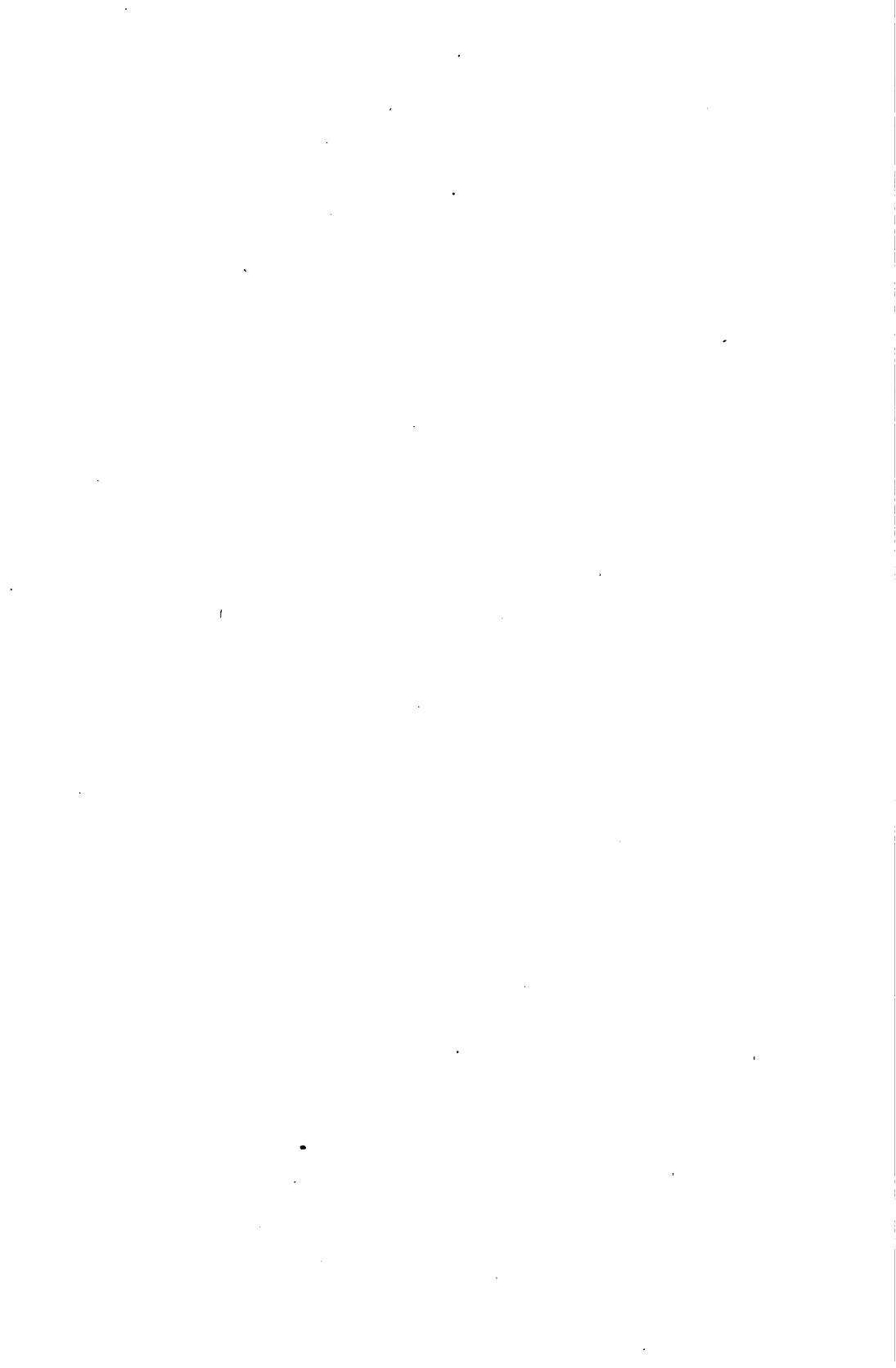


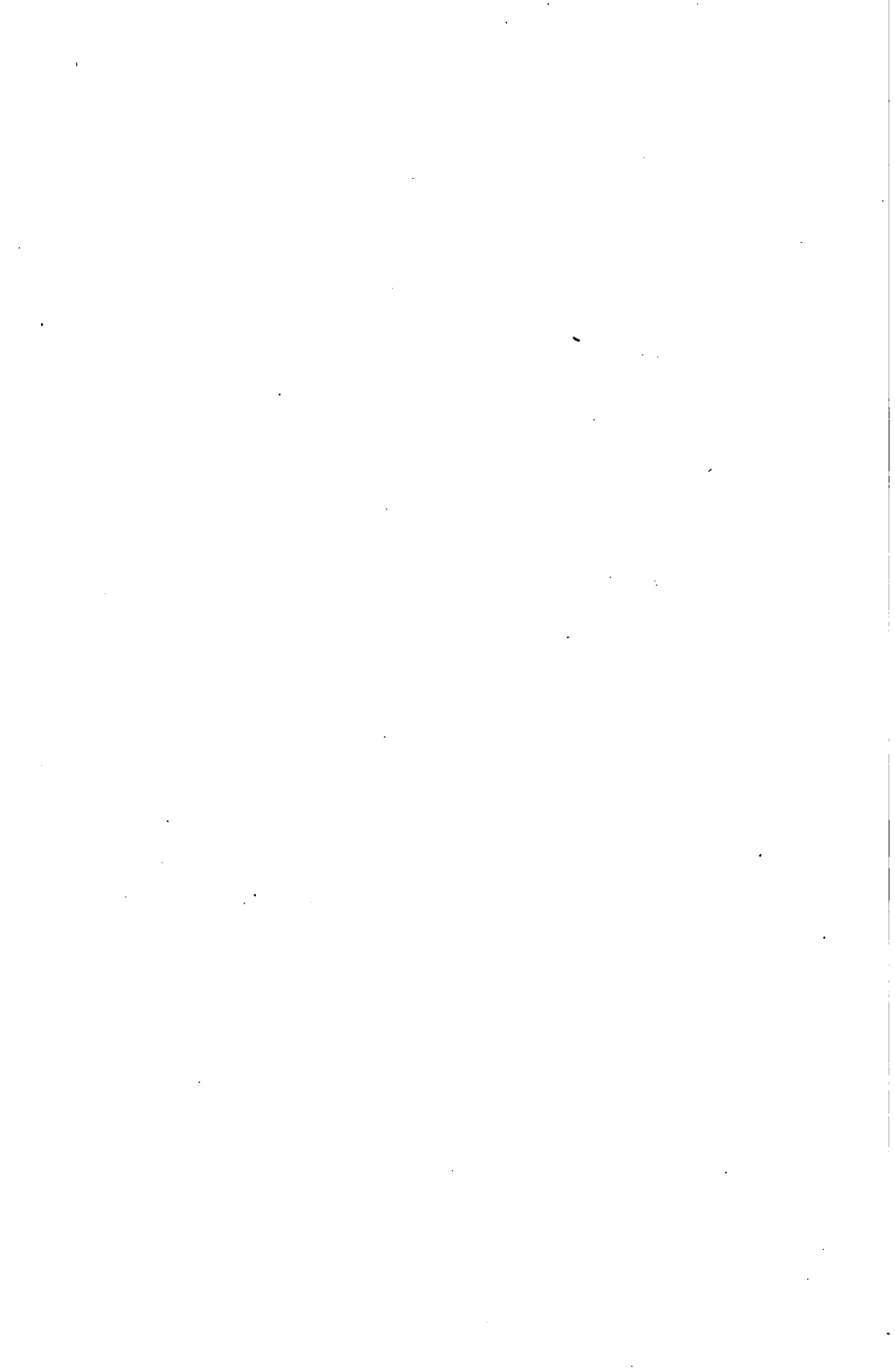














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